

Cover Letter Critique

Dear Mr./Ms. LastName:

The job listing posted on WriteJobs.com for a Production Editor-Proofreader caught my attention. I am confident that my experience fulfilling directives of marketing projects and my ability to produce high-quality written material on deadline would be valuable to your Sales Intelligence team.¹

I am currently working toward earning my bachelor's degree in English and Professional Writing. Last year I completed an associate's degree program in business administration, graduating with honors. My current GPA stands at 4.0. **Since my education is online, grades are based solely on written communication.**²

During the past eighteen months **I have produced close to 100 projects, including essays, reports, proposals, letters, emails, charts, graphs, tables, discussion board postings, and PowerPoint presentations.**³ **My associate's degree in business actually contributed to enhancing my writing abilities.**⁴ In addition, by going back to school after first working in business for seven years, **I bring practical skills and appreciable experience from the job world with tangible accomplishments and aptitudes.**⁵

Your job listing indicates you're seeking someone with a sharp eye for detail to **help facilitate the production flow of client deliverables.**⁶ My extensive experience with print media helped me to sharpen my eye by proofreading countless materials prior to going to press. My three years spent in the insurance field added to my attention to detail. **I analyzed, reviewed, and processed group insurance documents and applications,**

¹ The applicant makes no attempt at establishing a personal connection in this opening paragraph.

² Don't make the employer connect dots. It seems that the point here is that the candidate has extensive experience with written communication. But on the initial read, this sentence feels like a random aside about how they're graded.

³ This is weak for two reasons. One, the list is too long. In general, apply the rule of 3 to your lists for max impact. Two, employers don't care about your discussion board postings. If you have to discuss run of the mill college assignments, highlight the skills and then jump directly to benefits. In this case, you'd want to focus on how your writing assignments honed your proofreading skills. That is the job position after all.

⁴ How? If you can't answer how, then cut it entirely.

⁵ This paragraph is loosely organized at best. I would emphasize the 7 years in business with its own paragraph.

⁶ There *has* to be a more human way of phrasing this. Find it.

making sure all components were present and complete to comply with insurance regulations and laws.⁷ In this job, there was no room for errors. With over seven years of history working with promotional projects, my primary responsibility and objective has always been simple – to satisfy the client.

My work has instilled in me resourcefulness, insight, integrity and accountability. I hope we can meet so I can **provide some more examples**⁸ of my skills and **explore the contributions I could bring to the position.**⁹

Please contact me at JaneDoe@email.com or 312-550-1111 to arrange a time. I look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your consideration for this position.

Sincerely,

Handwritten Signature (hard copy letter)

FirstName LastName

⁷ This line is effective. It also establishes stakes with “regulations and laws,” which shows the applicant was able to perform under pressure.

⁸ A great opportunity to link to a portfolio

⁹ The applicant hasn’t touched on any specific benefits to the company. As a hiring manager, I would have no idea whether the applicant knows what the company does or not. If I had to trade content, I would remove the paragraph about education (simply saying, I’m pursuing my degree in English at XYZ University). I would replace it with a paragraph on how the applicant’s skills would benefit the Sales Intelligence department (and whatever it is they sell).