



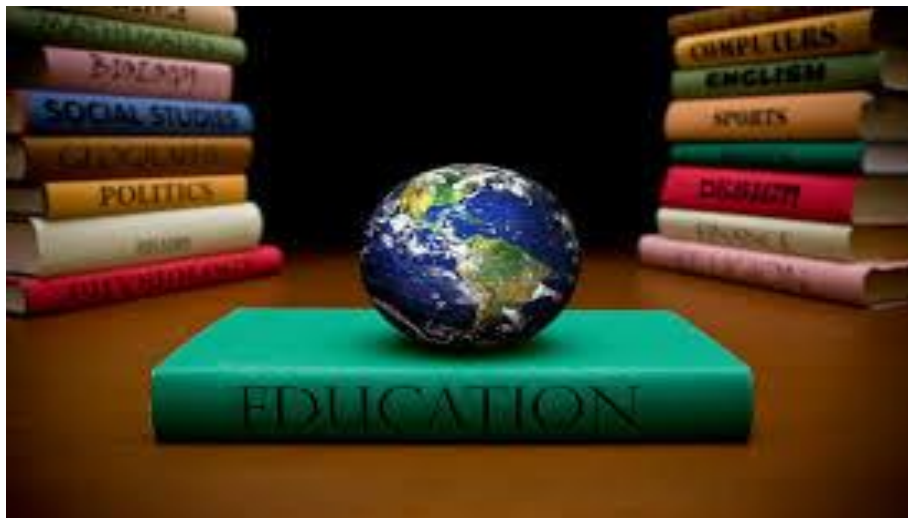
# Academic and Career Enrichment Center

BENEDICTINE UNIVERSITY

## **A GUIDE FOR EDUCATION MAJORS:**

Writing Cover Letters, Resumes and the  
Online Application Process

### **WORKFORCE READINESS:**



EXPLORE | EXPERIENCE | ENGAGE | EMERGE

*Academic and Career Enrichment Center (ACE)*

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# WRITING EFFECTIVE COVER LETTERS

## What is a Cover Letter

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The cover letter is one of the most important documents in the job search process. It communicates to the school district why you are the best candidate for the position. While the resume must be a concise, hard-hitting summary of all you have to offer, the cover letter offers you an opportunity to stand out as an individual and highlights and expands on the accomplishments/experiences listed in your resume.

Additionally, the cover letter provides the first written correspondence with a prospective employer or contact. Thus, it is critical that your cover letter communicate your skills and experiences in an articulate, well-organized way. In some cases, telling a compelling story that has influenced you to pursue a career in teaching or has made an impact on you can make you memorable and stand out from other candidates.

## Goals of the Cover Letter

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- To express your interest in the organization and purpose for writing.
- To show how your education, experience and accomplishments directly relate to the position/district.
- To demonstrate your interest in the school district and explain how you can add value.
- To suggest a possible meeting between you and the district to discuss your qualifications further.

## Cover Letter Guidelines

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- Type the letter; never send a hand written cover letter.
- Your cover letter must be error free. Check grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Display your contact information in the same way as is displayed on your resume so your documents appear consistent with your own letterhead.
- Always address your letter to a specific person, preferably, the person who is doing the hiring. If you are unsure of the appropriate name or title, call the district office to ask or visit the district's website for the information. If you cannot find a name, use "Dear Administrator" or "Dear Hiring Manager."
- Target your cover letter to the district to which you are applying; avoid generic letters. Do research on the district so you can address why you are interested in working there as well as how you will make a positive impact.
- Keep your letter short and concise--about 3 to 4 paragraphs. Do not exceed one page.
- Avoid clichés, slang and jargon.
- Always be positive by stressing past accomplishments and future value.
- Use good quality, bond paper –white, cream or gray if sending it through the mail. Match it with the color of your resume.
- Avoid passive voice. Use action verbs to describe your experience.



# COVER LETTER FORMAT

Your contact information should be written in your own letterhead/brand style. Include:

Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip  
Telephone Number  
Email

Date of Letter

Contact's Name, Title  
School Name/Department  
Street Address  
City, State and Zip Code

## ***Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Contact's Last Name:***

- address to a specific person if possible. Be sure to use proper title.
- always use a formal opening; never use a first name only

## ***Opening Paragraph:***

- explain why you are writing
- explain how you found out about the position (i.e. a personal contact, website listing)
- provide some other information that will entice the reader to continue reading the letter
- if you were referred by someone in the district, include that person's name in the first paragraph

## ***Body Paragraph(s): could be two, three or four paragraphs***

- discuss academic background and/or training
- emphasize accomplishments and recognition
- discuss relevant skills, student teaching experience and other relevant experiences working with kids
- demonstrate how your background/experiences are a match for the district and how you can add value
- if a career changer, communicate your motivation for becoming a teacher

## ***Closing Paragraph:***

- politely request an interview
- thank the contact for their time, consideration
- express positive match
- draw a connection between you and the district and explain why you want to work there

Sincerely, (leave 4 line spaces after sincerely)

Your signature/electronic signature here

Type Full Name  
Enclosure if mailing letter



# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

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Julie Smith

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111 College Road, Lisle, IL • 60532 • 630-829-0000 • jsmith@ben.edu

March 5, 2010

Dr. Rita Johnson, Director of Personnel  
XYZ School District  
375 Fullerton Street  
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Dr. Johnson,

I am writing in response to an advertisement on your district's Web page for a 7<sup>th</sup> grade teaching position for the 2011-2012 academic year. I am particularly interested in your school district because I recently completed my student teaching in an academically and socioeconomically diverse school such as yours. I believe I excelled in this environment and desire to teach in a district with similar challenges where I am confident I can make a positive impact.

During my student teaching experience, I developed creative and engaging lesson plans and utilized a variety instructional strategies and different assessments to measure learning. One of the things I believe made me successful was that I strived to develop nurturing relationships with the students, which involved active listening, getting to know them as individuals inside and outside the classroom and treating them with dignity and respect. Additionally, I was successful in implementing a classroom management plan that was based on positive reinforcement and active learning. I believe these approaches utilized in the classroom contributed to creating an atmosphere of respect, discipline and joy in learning.

I would be very excited at the chance to discuss my qualifications further in a personal interview. I believe I am an excellent match for your district having been exposed to a similar school environment in student teaching. I would bring an awareness of the types of challenges and issues that your students and school face and insight into how to resolve these issues.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Respectfully Yours,

*Julie Smith*

Julie Smith  
Enclosure (1)

# CREATING A STRONG RESUME

## What is a Resume

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A resume is a professional advertisement of who you are in terms of your competencies, accomplishments, and future capabilities. It is your chief marketing tool for opening the doors of prospective employers.

From the applicant's perspective, the goal of a resume is to help get interviews, which in turn, lead to job offers.

From the employer's perspective, resumes should communicate potential value, i.e. what applicants can offer the employer. In addition, resumes are mechanisms for screening candidates. Employers spend approximately 30 seconds reviewing each resume so the most pertinent information should appear in the first 1/3 of the document and the formatting should be such that the resume is easily read and well-organized.

Remember, employers are not seeking to hire your history - they want to know your capabilities and competencies.

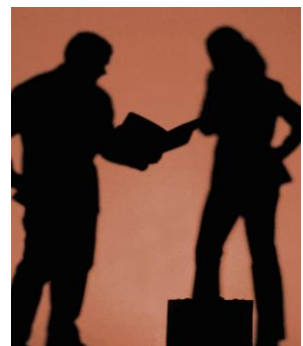
When writing a resume, ***always remember that you are advertising yourself for an interview*** and not for a job. Job offers only come after interviews. An effective resume should make a prospective employer want to meet you in person to discuss your qualifications and possible contributions and potential to solve their problems. It should clearly and factually communicate to the employer what it is you can do for them. Above all, it should be honest, positive, concise, easily read, and truly reflect ***you***.

You should write your own resume; you should not imitate or plagiarize someone else's resume and letters. You must begin from your own ground of experience in developing a resume and letters which clearly communicate who you are, what you want to do, and what you are most likely to do in the future for an employer. This takes time, effort, care, and professionalism on your part. No one should do this for you. However, after doing a resume draft, you should get feedback from at least four others. We invite you to make an appointment with one of our professionals for a resume review.

## What a Resume can do

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- Review your experience and communicate your potential value to employers.
- Provide information as part of your file in any placement service you use.
- Accompany your application letters in response to vacancy announcements.
- Be an integral part of the informational interview and/or networking process.
- Focus and communicate your job objective and qualifications.
- Serve as supplemental information to employment applications and letters of inquiry about possible job openings.



## Resume Guidelines – Do's and Don'ts

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### Do's

- Make sure that 90% to 100% of your content relates to your objective, directly or indirectly.
- Be sure the action verbs maintain consistency in tense – present tense for what you are doing now, past tense for what you did.
- Use simple, concise terms rather than complex expressions that say the same thing.

- Use quantities, amounts, dollar values where they enhance the description of what you did (“increased sales by \$100,000 per year”).
- Have someone with good English skills check for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Avoid use of “I” or “me”.
- Do not include hobbies, avocational or social interests unless they clearly contribute to your work abilities or your uniqueness.
- Avoid purely personal evaluations, e.g., “*I am an intelligent and diligent researcher*” – is to be avoided. “*Have finished three major research projects*” – would be included.

### Don'ts

- **Don't** include pictures.
- **Don't** list references.
- **Don't** put resume in fancy binders or folders.
- **Don't** forget phone number, area code, or zip code.
- **Don't** list sex, weight, health, or personal irrelevancies.
- **Don't** highlight problems (divorce, hospitalization, handicaps).
- **Don't** include addresses of prior employers (city and state are all that's necessary).
- **Don't** include salary information in your resume.

### **Final Reminder:**

Remember that your resume is a demonstration of your writing ability and communicates your potential as a candidate. Plan to revise your resume several times before you have a final product.

## Resume Components

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Educator resumes have some of the same information as other resumes, but also contain additional information that is germane to the teaching field. For example, resumes will typically include student teaching and clinical experiences, certification information and activities/hobbies. Educator resumes will frequently go beyond one page to incorporate relevant experience working with children. It is recommended not to exceed two pages. Resume components/headings should be prioritized in order of the strongest selling point for the type of job to which you are applying.

**Heading/Contact Information:** Consider creating your own personal letterhead/brand with your name, address, phone number and email address. Be sure your email address and outgoing voice mail message is professional.

**Objective Statement:** For many resumes, including an objective is optional. However, for educators, a teaching objective is often included because it identifies what areas you wish and are qualified to teach. In addition, if you are interested in coaching any extracurricular activities, you can include it in the objective or in the cover letter.

**Summary/Qualifications/Profile:** An alternate option to having an objective statement is to have a section such as a profile or summary where you communicate who you are in terms of your strongest talents, skills and or experiences. This can be formatted as a short paragraph or a series of bulleted statements.

**Education:** Include the name of the school with city and state, date of graduation or anticipated date, degree title, major, minor, concentration if applicable and G.P.A. (i.e. 3.6/4.0) As a general rule, do not include high school information or colleges/universities where you did not receive a degree.

## Resume Components (continued)

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**License and Endorsements:** License and endorsement information should be included on your resume with date or anticipated date received. This information can be combined with the education section or included in a separate category.

**Student Teaching:** Especially true for new educators, the student teaching component is one of the most important areas of the resume and thus should be located as the first employment experience following your education and certification sections. Content in this section should be thoughtful and reflect your accomplishments, instructional strategies used; lesson plans developed, and school involvement.

**Pre-Clinical Experience:** This information may be included in the resume especially if the preclinical experience involved more hands-on teaching.

**Employment Experience:** As a prospective teacher, you should include in your work history any experiences that involve working with students grades K-12. Relevant experiences include but are not limited to teacher's aide, camp counselor, troop leader or tutor. Other unrelated work experience may be included; however, generally this information is limited to allow for more emphasis on teaching-related experience.

**Interests/Activities:** While this section is generally considered a "filler" on most resumes, for educators, this component is recommended as it shows your versatility as a teacher and the potential extracurricular activities you could be involved in at the district.

### Other resume components/headings that can appear on the resume include:

Community Service

Volunteer Work

Professional Preparation

Teaching Experience

Relevant Experience/Related experience

Study Abroad

Additional Training

Additional Experience

Professional Experience

Prior Work History

Leadership Experience

Awards

Honors Publications

Professional Development

Professional Affiliations or Memberships

Activities

Computer Skills

Languages

Professional Presentation

Career Goal



## Key Resume Words

The following list should help you best describe your work history/skills. With your current position, be sure to use verbs in the present tense. With your past employment, use the past tense of verbs.

Ability	Compiled	Enacted	Inspected	Performed	Routinely
Accomplished	Completed	Encouraged	Inspired	Persuaded	Saved
Accountable	Composed	Enforced	Installed	Piloted	Scheduled
Accurately	Computed	Engineered	Instigated	Pioneered	Scope
Achieved	Conceptualized	Enhanced	Instilled	Planning	Screened
Acquired	Conceived	Enlisted	Instituted	Played	Secured
Acted as	Conclusively	Ensured	Instructed	Positive	Selected
Actively	Condensed	Enthusiastically	Instrumental	Potential	Sensitive
Adapted	Conducted	Entirely	insured	Precise	Separated
Adept	Conserved	Equipped	Integrated	Predicted	Served
Addressed	Consistently	Established	Intensive	Prepared	Set up
Adjusted	Consolidated	Estimated	Interacted	Presented	Shaped
Advanced	Constructed	Evaluated	Interfaced	Prevented	Shifted
Advised	Consulted	Evolved	Interpreted	Processed	Significant
Administered	Contacted	Examined	Invented	Procured	Simplified
Aggressively	Continually	Exceptional	Investigated	Productive	Skillful
Allocated	Contracted	Executed	Judged	Professional	Sold
Altered	Contributed	Expanded	Justified	Proficient	Solidified
Analyzed	Controlled	Expedited	Kept	Progressive	Solved
Appraised	Converted	Experience	Knowledgeable	Projected	Sophisticated
Approved	Cooperated	Experimented	Launched	Promoted	Spearehead
Arbitrated	Coordinated	Expert	Lectured	Proposed	Specialized
Arranged	Corrected	Explained	Led/leadership	Proven	Spoke
Articulated	Correlate	Expressed	Liaison	Provided	Staffed
Assembled	Correspond	Extensive	Lifted	Publicized	Stimulated
Ascertained	Counseled	Extracted	Locate	Published	Strategic
Assertive	Cultivated	Extremely	Logged	Purchased	Streamlined
Assessed	Created	Fabricated	Logical thinking	Qualified	Structured
Assigned	Dealt	Facilitated	Made	Quality	Substantially
Assimilated	Decided	Familiar	Maintained	Quantity	Successfully
Assisted	Defined	Feasible	Major	Quickly	Summarized
Assured	Delegated	Financed	Managed	Received	Supervised
Attended	Delivered	Follow-up	Marketed	Recognized	Supplied
Attained	Demonstrated	Forecasted	Mastered	Recommended	Supported
Audited	Designed	Foresight	Mature	Reconciled	Synthesized
Augmented	Detected	Formulated	Meaningful	Recorded	Tactfully
Authoritative	Determined	Founded	Mediated	Recruited	Taught
Aware	Developed	Functioned	Minimized	Rectified	Team building
Balanced	Devised	Gained	Monitored	Reevaluated	Tenacious
Beneficial	Diagnosed	Gathered	Motivated	Refined	Tested
Bought	Diligent	Generated	Negotiated	Regulated	Thoroughly
Briefed	Diplomatically	Governed	Nominated	Rehabilitated	Trained
Brought	Directed	Guided	Notable	Related	Transferred
Budgeted	Discovered	Handled	Objective	Reliable	Transformed
Built	Dispensed	Headed	Observed	Reorganized	Transformed
Calculate	Dissected	Identified	Obtained	Repaired	Translated
Capability	Distinctively	Illustrated	Offered	Reported	Trouble shoot
Capacity	Distribute	Imaginative	Operated	Represented	Unified
Clarified	Diverted	Implemented	Optimized	Researched	Unique
Classified	Documented	Improved	Orchestrated	Resolved	Updated
Coaching	Drafted	Improvised	Ordered	Resourceful	Utilized
Cohesive	Dynamic	Incisive	Organized	Responded	Validated
Collaborated	Earned	Increased	Originated	Responsible	Varied
Collect	Edited	Industrious	Overcame	Restored	Verified
Commanded	Effectiveness	Influenced	Oversee	Revamped	Versatile
Commended	Efficiently	Informed	Participated	Reviewed	Vigorously
Communicated	Elaborated	Inherent	Particularly	Revised	Virtually
Compared	Eliminated	Initiated	Perceived	Revived	Widely
Competency	Employed	Innovated	Perfected	Rigorous	Wrote



## Teacher Resume Sample #1

### TOM SCIENCE

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220 College Road Lisle, IL 60532-0900

PH: 102.555.0001

[toms@123.com](mailto:toms@123.com)

- OBJECTIVE:** Seeking a teaching position in middle school or high school science.
- EDUCATION:** **Benedictine University**, Lisle, IL December 2014  
Bachelor of Science in Biology  
Minors: Secondary Education and Math  
Major G.P.A.: 3.9/4.0; Cumulative G.P.A.: 3.6/4.0
- LICENSURE:** Illinois Professional Educator License December 2014  
Endorsements:  
Secondary Education (6-12), *Biology, General Science, Math and Middle School*
- STUDENT TEACHING:** **John Smith High School**, Genoa City, IL Fall 2014  
*Student Teacher (Science Department)*
- Developed and implemented lesson plans for two sections of biology, and one section of general science and Geometry
  - Created and taught units on solar energy incorporating learning stations and technology applications including Smart Board
  - Participated in professional learning community and contributed to curriculum ideas and lessons for an AP Biology section.
  - Coordinated school science fair involving sophomore science students and served as a judge
  - Utilized performance and skill-based assessments to measure learning
  - Instructed a diverse student population and promoted a sense of inclusion among all students
- PRECLINICAL EXPERIENCE:** **Northbrook Middle School**, Northbrook, IL Spring 2014  
*Eighth Grade Science Program Observation*
- Roosevelt Middle School**, Lyons, IL Fall 2013  
*Middle School Math*
- VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:** **Olive Youth Services**, Frankfort, IL Summer 2012 & 2013  
*Youth Mentor*
- Provided support services to youth and served as positive role model
  - Tutored children ages 8-12 in math and science, utilizing a caring encouraging approach to increase confidence and success
- AFFILIATIONS:** **Benedictine University**, Lisle, IL Fall 2013 - present  
President, UNICEF  
Treasurer, Science Educators Association (local chapter)
- HONORS AND AWARDS:** St. Benedict Scholarship recipient  
“Great Minds Think Alike” award, given by Lisle HS Science Department

## Teacher Resume Sample #2

### Julie English

1111 College Street • Lisle, IL 60532 • 630-829-0000 • [jdaniel@yahoo.com](mailto:jdaniel@yahoo.com)

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#### CAREER OBJECTIVE

Seeking a career as a High School English Teacher where I can motivate all students and provide innovative, creative lessons that engage and promote lifelong learners.

#### EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

Benedictine University, Lisle, IL

##### **Bachelor of Arts in English**

Anticipated: May 2012

Minor: Secondary Education

- G.P.A.: 3.8/4.0
- Studied abroad at University of Salamanca, Madrid Spain; Improved fluency in language

##### **License and Endorsements:**

Illinois Professional Educator License

Anticipated: May 2015

Secondary Education (6-12), English, Language Arts and Middle School

Anticipated: May 2015

#### PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION

Wheaton North High School, Wheaton, IL

August 2014- Present

##### **Student Teacher, English**

- Developed and taught curriculum for American Literature and English Composition
- Created thematic unit on professional communication integrating activities and skill development in social media, blogging and business writing
- Incorporated a variety of instructional strategies to meet the IL Teaching Standards including cooperative groups, CRISS strategies and direct instruction
- Differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners including students with IEP's
- Actively promoted partnerships with parents through frequent phone contact, creation of parent newsletter and meaningful interaction at parent-teacher conferences.

Bolingbrook Middle School, Bolingbrook, IL

January 2014 – May 2014

##### **Preclinical Experience, Middle School Language Arts**

- Taught units on Greek mythology, creative writing and poetry.
- Volunteered to assist Cooperating teacher with Drama Club activities

#### RELATED EXPERIENCE

Student Success Center, Benedictine University, Lisle, IL

August 2013 – June 2014

##### **Writing Tutor**

- Review and edit student papers and make recommendations for improvement
- Establish good rapport with students and help to empower their success

Candor, (Student Newspaper) Benedictine University, Lisle, IL

September 2012- June 2013

##### **Staff Writer**

- Strengthened writing ability by writing and editing a variety of articles and news features
- Learned to work effectively with team of 10 people to meet tight deadlines

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Elected by student body to be Student Senator/Leader for College of Education
- Served as VP for Student Chapter of Illinois Education Association at Benedictine
- Attended National Education Association Conference in Chicago in June 2009

### **Teacher Resume sample #3**

#### **RACHEL READ**

(815) 555-1212

[Rrachelread@yahoo.com](mailto:Rrachelread@yahoo.com)

100 Main St.

Lisle, IL 60532

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#### **EDUCATION**

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**Benedictine University**, Lisle, IL

**May 2010**

Master in Education, Reading and Literacy

**Illinois State University**, Normal, IL

**May 2008**

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education

Type 03 Illinois certificate; endorsements in Social Sciences and Language Arts

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#### **EXPERIENCE**

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**CANDLESTICK PRESCHOOL**, Naperville, IL

**Introduction to Kindergarten Ideas Head Teacher**

**September 2007 - Present**

- Teach a blended program for typically developing and special needs students between the ages three and a half to five years old
- Institute The Wright Skills and Break Through to Literacy reading programs into the daily curriculum
- Design center activities for independent work based on leveled options and multiple intelligences
- Create differentiated assessments to test each student's knowledge of subject, to set goals, and to highlight achievements
- Administer formal and informal assessments to identify student strengths and weaknesses
- Create weekly newsletters providing important information and curriculum updates to families
- Implement quarterly parent teacher conferences, addressing individual student progress and perceived learning style
- Maintain constant contact with speech language pathologists and therapeutic providers to enhance the performance of special needs students

**Junior Kindergarten Head Teacher**

**September 2006 – June 2007**

- Developed a hands-on, theme-based, child-centered curriculum for children ages four to five
- Collaborated with staff to produce a school curriculum that would expand core knowledge
- Created a curriculum that focused on integrating different content areas into thematic units
- Produced original Language Arts lessons, incorporating a balanced literacy approach including phonemic awareness, phonics, literature, word wall, vocabulary concepts, and spelling
- Organized classroom meetings to foster positive student discipline and creative problem solving
- Maintained contact with parents through daily letters and parent teacher conferences
- Created an in-depth assessment presentation that logged student achievements and methods applied to improve skill areas

**Assistant Teacher**

**May 2006 – September 2006**

- Assisted Speech Language Pathologists in therapeutic classes with children 18 months to 5 years
- Planned adaptive curriculum for therapeutic students, individualizing projects to specific abilities

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#### **STUDENT TEACHING**

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**Gaston Elementary School**, Downers Grove, IL

**Winter 2006**

- Taught 25 students in a self-contained second grade classroom
- Generated and enforced a specialized behavior management plan

## **Teacher Resume Sample #4**

### **Robert B. Business**

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888 College Road, Lisle, IL 60532 630-829-1111 630-829-1112 (Cell) [robertbusiness@ben.edu](mailto:robertbusiness@ben.edu)

#### ***-Secondary Business Educator-***

Enthusiastic, passionate and versatile individual eager to bring real world business knowledge and college teaching experience into to the classroom to create meaningful learning. Demonstrated ability to develop and implement creative and engaging lessons that meet the IL Teaching standards and the needs of students' diverse learning style. Strong desire to positively impact students outside the classroom through involvement in extracurricular activities.

#### **EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS**

**Master of Arts in Teaching**, Benedictine University, Lisle, IL Anticipated: December 2014

IL Professional Educator License

Endorsements in Secondary Education, Business Education and Math

**Bachelor of Science in Business**, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL May 2004

Minor: Math, Concentration in Business Technology

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#### **STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Student Teacher**, Downers Grove South High School, Downers Grove, IL January -May 2014

- Develop and implement lessons for Intro to Business and Business Ethics integrating real case studies, technology and speakers from the business community.
- Created a unit on developing a social media presence for individuals and businesses 12
- Partnered with Professional Learning Team to develop a new course in Web Page Design
- Volunteered to assist with a district-wide project to revamp technology branding

#### **PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Adjunct Faculty**, College of Dupage, Glen Ellyn, IL August 2013 – present

- Taught courses in Business Technology and Business Math to undergraduate students

**Operations Manager**-Target Corporation, Hinsdale, IL September 2004 – August 2008

- Accountable for \$100M of retail business, 6 stores, and 2000 employees.
- Improved productivity, efficiency, and quality of operations via staffing, training, customer service, inventory and cost savings initiatives
- Managed and analyzed P & L to maximize financial performance of 6 retail locations
- Progressively moved up within the organization with increasing responsibility beginning in a Financial Analyst role, then Operations Analyst and then a Management role

#### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

PTO Board Member, Naperville School District 203, August 2011 – June 2012

School Leadership Team, Naperville School District 203, August 2008 – June 2009

Conference Presenter, Small Business Association Convention, May 2005

#### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT/INTERESTS**

Youth Football League, Lisle Park District, Summers 2008-2010

Brothers/Big Sisters, January 2003-December 2005

Interests include: Baseball, Football, Art, Music and Tutoring

# SAMPLE REFERENCE PAGE

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## References for Julie Smith

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111 College Road, Lisle, IL • 60532 • 630-829-0000 • jsmith@ben.edu

Dr. Terry Smith, Professor of Education  
Benedictine University  
5700 College Road  
Lisle, IL 60532  
630/829-6000  
Current Professor

Ms. Mary Mitchell, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher  
XYZ School District  
2766 West 95<sup>th</sup> Street  
Evergreen Park, IL 60372  
630/769-2451  
Cooperating Teacher for Student Teaching

Mr. Mike Bill, Assistant Principal  
XYZ School District  
2766 West 95<sup>th</sup> Street  
Evergreen Park, IL 60372  
630/769-2458

Dr. Susan Breaton, Professor of Education  
Benedictine University  
5700 College Road  
Lisle, IL 60532  
630/829-5555  
Site Supervisor for Student Teaching

### Guidelines for References

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The reference page should be prepared to bring to an interview and should be on the same paper as your resume and cover letter. If possible, make the font, type quality and letterhead consistent with that of your resume. Information should include the references name, current job title, organization name, address and phone and your relationship to the reference. In the online application process, there will be a section for you to include this reference information. Often with these sections on the application, you will have the option of uploading a letter of recommendation from that individual.

**It is imperative that you obtain an individual's permission before using them as a reference.** It is helpful to your references to give them your resume or a bulleted list of your strengths and accomplishments so address these points in the letter. Generally, three to five references will be adequate. For educators, the best references are those individuals who have observed your teaching. Examples are professors, student teacher supervisors, cooperating teachers, principals, and other school personnel. In many cases, these references will also be the same individuals that write letters of recommendation for you. Other references that can be included are former supervisors, colleagues and individuals from volunteer and related experiences.

# ASSEMBLING YOUR CREDENTIALS FOR THE ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS



## What Credentials Will You Need

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It used to be that education majors would establish a credential file with their Career office at their college/university and then the Career Office would send off the credential packet to districts upon the candidate's request. However, in today's job market for education majors, nearly all school districts have an online application process in which the candidate can self-manage his or her own credentials. What this means is that you will have copies of your own credentials and can upload them to each online application.

The following items are typical documents that are requested to be uploaded by candidates as part of the online application process. Please be advised to read instructions carefully for each application completed to clearly understand what supplemental materials to submit and any special guidelines to submit them.

**Cover letter/Letter of Introduction:** The cover letter or sometimes called a letter of introduction should be crafted for each particular school district to which you are applying. As is emphasized in the cover letter guidelines section of this packet, be sure to do research on the district so you can address why you are interested in working there and how you will add value.

**Resume:** Your resume should be tailored to the position/district to which you are applying.

**Letters of Recommendation:** You will be requested to upload 3-5 letters of recommendation to your application. In many cases, this will take place in the reference section of the application where you list your references and then have the opportunity to upload a letter for each reference. As stated in the reference section, the strongest references are from those individuals who have had the opportunity to observe you teach and can speak specifically to your capabilities and accomplishments. Such individuals include cooperating teacher, site supervisor, principal/assistant principal if they have had the opportunity to observe you teach, college professors or other individuals who have observed you in roles interacting with kids.

**Transcripts:** You will be asked to upload transcripts from all schools attended. Be sure to request transcripts from all schools attended to be issued to you so you have all of them in your possession. Transcripts need not be official for the online application; in most cases, photocopies will suffice. On some applications, there is a size limit for each transcript, which is typically 1 MB so photocopies work better to scan and upload because they are smaller in size.

**Copy of Certificate:** When you obtain your certificate, you can scan and upload it to your application.

## Tips for Completing the Online Application

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- Take enough time to complete each application. Review it thoroughly for grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. It should be 100 % error free! Keep in mind that districts can still review your application before you have actually submitted it so review your work for accuracy as you go along.
- Read all directions thoroughly because applications do vary from school to school. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact the Human Resources office at the school.
- Make sure your responses to essay questions are thoughtful, thorough and student-centered. Often the questions asked give you insight into what the school sees as important. Convey in your answers that you have a passion for educating young people and possess a thorough knowledge of your field.
- Refresh your application about once a month so that your application appears in the first section of applications searched by a school. Applications are viewed by most recently submitted. **Additional tips for the application process can be found in the "Job Search Handbook for Educators – 2014"**

# Job Search Sites for Educators

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## REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION

[www.cescook.org](http://www.cescook.org)

Cook County ROE

[dekalbcounty.org/ROE/](http://dekalbcounty.org/ROE/)

DeKalb County ROE

[www.dupage.k12.il.us](http://www.dupage.k12.il.us)

DuPage County ROE

[roe24.org/](http://roe24.org/)

Grundyl/Kendall County ROE

[www.i-kan.org/](http://www.i-kan.org/)

Iroquois-Kankakee County ROE

[www.teachinkane.org/about.html](http://www.teachinkane.org/about.html)

Kane County ROE

[www.lake.k12.il.us](http://www.lake.k12.il.us)

Lake County ROE

[www.mchenry.k12.il.us](http://www.mchenry.k12.il.us)

McHenry County ROE

[www.willroe.org](http://www.willroe.org)

Will County ROE

## ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

[www.isbe.state.il.us](http://www.isbe.state.il.us)

IL State Board of Education

## OTHER JOB SEARCH SITES

[www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)

Aggregator site to tap into job openings. Plug in keyword title(s), city

[www.k12jobspot.com](http://www.k12jobspot.com)

Search teaching vacancies

[www.teachers-teachers.com](http://www.teachers-teachers.com)

View vacancies, create/post application online, apply directly to schools

[cps.edu/careers](http://cps.edu/careers)

Chicago Public Schools-Careers

[www.applitrack.com/archchicago/onlineapp/](http://www.applitrack.com/archchicago/onlineapp/)

Archdiocese of Chicago Vacancies

[www.applitrack.com/UNO/onlineapp/default.aspx](http://www.applitrack.com/UNO/onlineapp/default.aspx)

UNO Charter School Network Vacancies in Chicago

[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

Professional networking site. Build connections, join groups and search for job openings.

## VIRTUAL CAREER CENTERS

[www.ben.edu/career](http://www.ben.edu/career)

Benedictine Virtual Career Center. (BVCC) Register profile, search job openings (part-time, full-time, internships, volunteer, seasonal,) and upload your resume.

[www.collegecentral.com/iscpa](http://www.collegecentral.com/iscpa)

Illinois Small College Placement Association. (ISCPA) Register profile, view full-time jobs and internships and register for CareerFest 2015 on Jan. 30th, a job fair which will feature approximately 25 school districts in attendance.