

The Art of the Flirty Cover Letter



Nick Fox

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Your Pickup Line

*Someone once asked, ‘What’s your best pickup line?’
I said, ‘My best pickup line is, ‘Hi, my name is
Hugh Hefner.’”*

Hugh Hefner

Before we dive right in, let me just say: nobody owes you their time. Just because you send in a job application does not mean that anyone **has** to read your materials, so it behooves you not to bore them.

The reason why I want to start with that reminder is that when you remember that an HR or hiring manager’s time is as important as your own, you’ll start recognizing how crucial it is to approach cover letters in a way that makes their life and time more enjoyable.

A survey by The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) found that 83% of respondents spent 1 minute or less reading the cover letters of candidates. The numbers only get worse as a company gets larger. Survey participants from companies with 250 employees or more indicated that they spend between just 1 and 30 seconds reading a cover letter.

You read that correctly, some HR managers spend just a single second reading your cover letter. I can hear some of you now, “But, Nick, that’s not fair! If I only have a few seconds of their attention, how the hell am I ever going to win them over?!” Well, I’m glad you asked, imaginary reader.

We like to imagine that people give us tons of time to make a first impression in our day to day life. However, time and time again, studies show that we make up our minds about people within just 7 to 30 seconds of meeting them. So, HR directors aren't being unfair to you, they're doing what *anyone* would do in that situation. They are the proverbial girl across the bar. If you don't make yourself seem worth her time within a few seconds, she will ignore you.

The fact is, despite people judging us by our covers on a day-to-day basis, we still manage to win friends, make small talk, and find partners in love. So, if you can do it in your everyday life, you can certainly do it in the job hunt when you are literally being judged by your cover [letter].

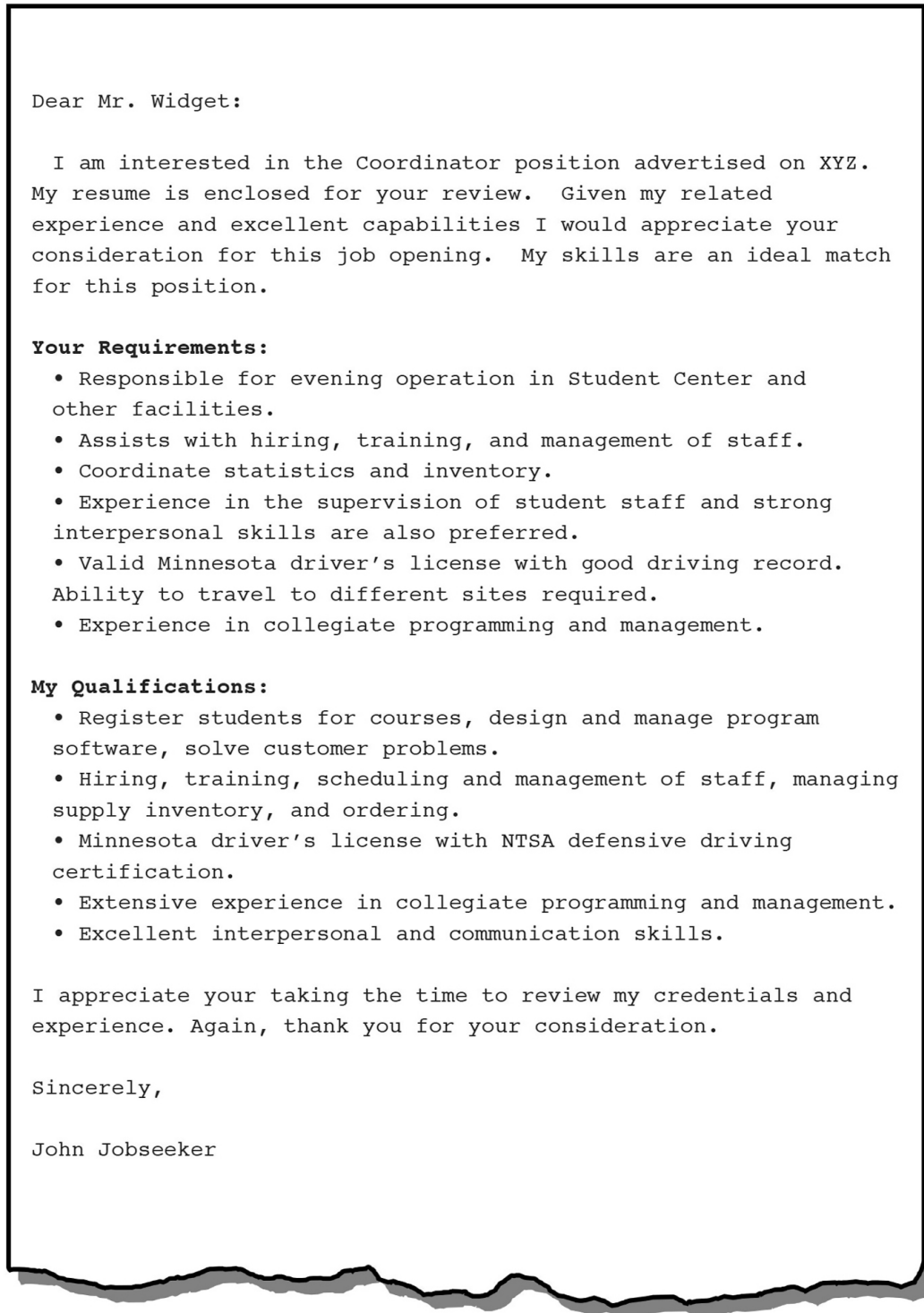
The advantage of remembering this is that it will light a fire under you to make sure you put the best parts of you up front, because if a hiring manager has to get to paragraph three before they find anything of interest about you, it's likely that they will never read it at all.

So, instead of fearing writing a cover letter, as most people do, take it as the challenge it is to make someone take an interest in you *as a person* and not just a series of achievements on a page. This is your one chance to tell them everything you want them to know about your personality, ethos, and whatever else you deem relevant.

If you're fun, be fun. If you're a bit crazy, show that off. If you're someone who doesn't mind getting their hands dirty, let them know. Your cover letter should be a reflection of the real you from beginning to end.

Too many people feel like they need to be some emotionless zombie when applying for a job. So they use cold, awkward language that makes them sound like the least fun person in the world to be around. I call this *Stoic Applicant Syndrome*. Most people don't intend to get trapped in Stoic Applicant Syndrome, but it creeps in when they start thinking, "How can I make this sound more professional?"

In order to show you how to avoid this trap, let's examine a pretty standard cover letter format you'll come across. In fact, it's one of the first templates you'll see when searching for "Cover Letter Template" on Google. Take a look:



Hopefully, that hurt you as much as it hurts me to read. If you just read that and thought, “Wow! What a perfect cover letter,” just stop reading now. The rest of this book can’t help you. However, if you’re like most people who find that cover letter painful, read on.

Many people know when a cover letter is bad, but unfortunately, most can’t quite pin down *why* it’s bad. That’s why it’s convenient to think of it like flirting at a bar, to better understand what’s going on under the surface.

If that horrendous cover letter was a flirting technique, it would involve a man walking straight up to a woman and blurting out, “Hey! I couldn’t help but notice that you have the genitalia that I’m attracted to. Would you like to have sex and immediately get married, having dozens of kids.” It’s what I imagine the song “Call Me Maybe” would be if made into a cover letter, and seems more deserving of a restraining order than a job.

We don’t move that fast in our personal lives, so why do most people seem to think it’s okay to suddenly force yourself on an employer? The sad truth is that most people don’t know any better, so without knowing what else to do, they trust a template like this one, and as a result immediately turn off the person reading it. Sure, it’s important for them to know you have the qualifications, but that’s why you have a résumé! Because of that you can afford to slow things down, and let them get to know you – as you would in the dating world.

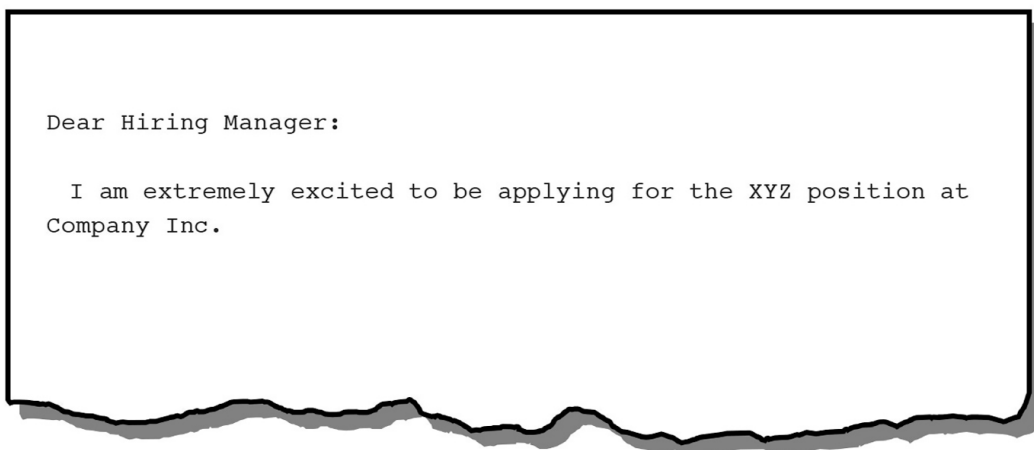
Just as in the world of flirting, you need some sort of opener to help ease the person into interacting with you so that you don’t become the creepy leering guy that all women (and companies) avoid like the plague. In the dating scene, this can be a story, a question, or a pickup line. Regardless of what it is, however, the intent is still the same. You want the person on the receiving end to see that you’re interested and for them to like **who you are** before you even get into **what you do**. In short: Be Babe Ruth.

As terrible as most pickup lines are, most have a common thread that makes them as persistent as they are: humor. It just so happens that this is the number one criteria women look for in a potential partner. So, as long as the guy has the right delivery – recognizing it as a joke – pickup lines, no matter how terrible, can actually work.

Obviously, you're not going to ask a potential employer whether they're wearing mirror pants, (*because you can see yourself in them*, in case you don't know that old chestnut) but just like pickup lines, by understanding what the other party wants in a match, you'll be better able to position yourself as the source of that. So what **do** hiring managers look for in an ideal employee?

In short, the success of everything from your cover letter to your interview all comes down to whether or not the hiring manager thinks you sound like someone enjoyable to work alongside. Your résumé is there to show you can do the job, but unless you seem driven and likable on your cover letter, it's likely that you'll be passed over as just another Stoic Applicant. Nobody wants to work alongside a mindless drone.

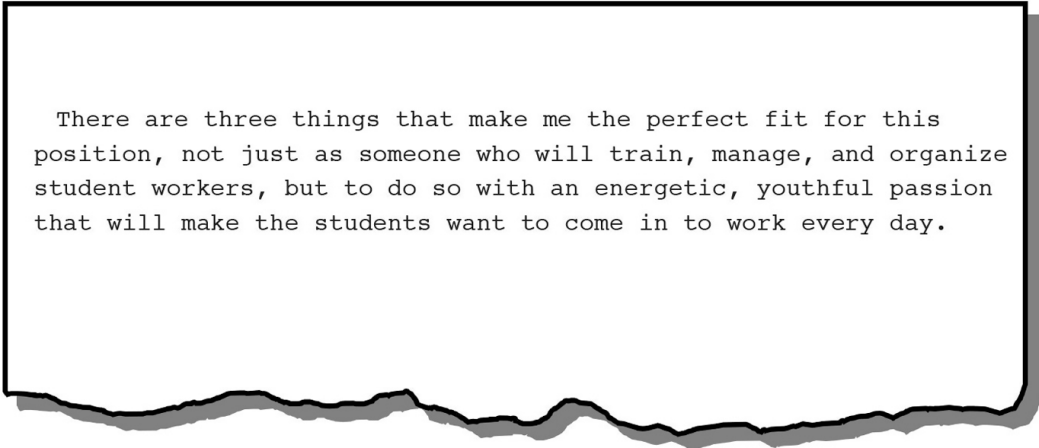
So let's make things really simple: in order to show your excitement for the position right off the bat, just say – and here comes the mind-blowing part – that you are excited. That is honestly one of the best ways you can open your cover letter. It doesn't have to be any more complicated than this:



Just like how simply introducing yourself can be one of the most successful ways to flirt, it's best not to overcomplicate your cover letter opener more than you need to.

Continuing on in the spirit of simplicity, you want to tell them upfront that you're a good match for the position, and that you're not going to waste their time just regurgitating their own job posting, like the earlier example did. This can be done, just by adding that there is a set number of reasons why you're a good fit; I like three.

The other thing you need to do, is to give yourself the room to begin talking more casually, to let your personality shine. To do this, you're going to use either words from the job posting or some demonstration of your knowledge of the industry or company as a rationale for talking about yourself. This gives you the ability to state what you can bring to the industry/company and, in the process, begins to introduce your narrative. So, that portion would look like this:



There are three things that make me the perfect fit for this position, not just as someone who will train, manage, and organize student workers, but to do so with an energetic, youthful passion that will make the students want to come in to work every day.

The words “train, manage, and organize student workers” are just phrases, like in the horrendous example, pulled straight from their own job posting. The difference here is that's all you're going to mention about the job requirements for now. The reason being, once they know that you're excited for the opportunity and that you haven't just *read* the job posting, but *understand* it on a level that allows you to know

what you can bring to the table to make yourself such a perfect fit, they'll be more interested in hearing about you, the person.

And that's exactly what you're going to give them...next.

About the Author

Nick Fox is a proven career designer, job coach, and speaker, providing exclusive training to a wide range of people, from students to CFOs, helping them design a career of their dreams.

His students are those who don't want to wait to achieve their dreams. With that in mind, he focuses on providing focused, measurable objectives to help his clients achieve big gains in their careers in the shortest amount of time.



Drawing from his experience in NYC finance and as a business owner, Nick gives realistic tactics, tried and tested in the real world, that anyone can apply to their own life to get ahead professionally.

In order to help more people design their dream life through free information, lessons, tips, and psychological strategies for success, Nick created and writes for the website **SuccessHacking.com**. It's an online community aimed at helping people achieve their financial, personal, and professional goals without having to waste their time trying to figure out "how" by showing you how to skip over the meaningless minutiae and focusing only on achieving major successes.

He spends what little free time he has wishing the show BattleBots would return to TV.

Full book available on Amazon.com

LINK: <http://bit.ly/flirtybook>