



TELL
A STORY
GET A
BETTER
JOB

THE POWER OF NARRATIVE
COVER LETTERS

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Chapter 1: Why You Need a Narrative Cover Letter

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We are, as a species,
addicted to story.

Even when the body
goes to sleep, the
mind stays up all
night, telling itself
stories.

JONATHON GOTTSCHALL

With today's increasingly automated jobs market where resumes often blur into an endless list of the same qualifications and experience points, so arises the need for a narrative cover letter – your opportunity to stand out. It's a device for you to rise above the bullet points and jargon, representing vividly who you are and what your contribution will look like if an employer hires you. Narrative cover letters leverage stories to spark an emotional connection so you will stand out to employers like an epic novel.

With some employment decisions determined in mere seconds, the skill of differentiation is powerful. A narrative cover letter accomplishes this goal by turning your qualifications into an engaging story that resonates emotionally and logically with the reader. This way, you are not only set apart from the competition, but you also provide an implicit demonstration of communication – a crucial 21st-century skill that is valuable in any professional career.

Storytelling in Personal Branding

Human beings have communicated with one another through stories since we developed the ability to speak. The science and art of telling the story in a way that facts are intertwined with emotions, appeals to readers including HR gatekeepers. At the heart of personal branding, storytelling empowers you by engineering a sense of purpose that aligns with your goals and ambition.

More than anything, personal branding is the development of a clear message about who you are and what beliefs govern how you work. Stories enable you to illustrate your message, which in turn enables you to communicate your strengths and who your skills help.



TO BE

CONTINUED...

**CHAPTER 2:
UNDERSTANDING
NARRATIVE COVER
LETTERS**

What is a narrative cover letter?

In essence, a narrative cover letter is an individualized document that compliments your resume and tells (the story) about how you have become to be qualified for the position. Narrative cover letters tell your tale instead of listing achievements and skills like traditional cover letters.

Key Points to Consider:

Differentiation: In a crowded job market, narrative cover letters offer a unique way to differentiate you by emphasizing your individuality and personal experiences that relate to the position.

Emotionally Engage: Storytelling engages the reader by allowing them to feel a connection and empathy that traditional cover letters simply cannot achieve.

Memorability: A good story sticks, ensuring you remain in hiring managers minds long after your application has been read.



A Narrative Cover Letter includes:

1. The Hook: The introduction that captures the reader's attention and introduces your story.
2. Body: A narrative of experiences, skills, and achievements relevant to the candidate.
3. Connection: The part that bridges your story to the job and/or company and illustrates why this opportunity resonates with your values and goals.
4. Final thoughts: A concrete closing that restates your interest and summarizes key points.



The Psychology Behind Storytelling

Storytelling is deeply rooted in human psychology. It taps into our innate desire for connection and understanding, making it an effective tool for communication. When people hear a story, their brains become more active, processing emotions, images, and experiences as if they were living the narrative themselves. This engagement makes storytelling a powerful mechanism for persuasion and memory retention.

Why Storytelling Works:

- **Engagement:** Stories engage multiple parts of the brain, fostering deeper understanding and retention of information.
- **Empathy:** By sharing personal experiences, storytelling evokes empathy, making the audience more receptive to the message.
- **Connection:** Stories create a sense of connection and relatability, building trust and rapport with the audience.



**CHAPTER 3:
THE BENEFITS
OF NARRATIVE
COVER
LETTERS**

Developing Emotional Relationships

The best way to build emotional connectedness between you and the hiring manager is through narrative cover letters. Personal stories and experiences within your application can instill empathy, creating a more human element to your application. And the connection — in a non-transactional sort of way — can separate you from others who simply use facts without emotion.

Displaying Your Uniqueness

In terms of content, the narrative cover letter is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your individual personality and voice — who you are beyond a resume or CV. This works to allow emotional dynamics into play with the reader through personal stories contained in your letter.

Communication Skills Exhibited

Almost every industry has high regard for those with strong communication skills. A narrative cover letter allows you the opportunity to showcase your ability to write coherently, structure an engaging story and communicate clearly with written language. Writing a concise narrative is also evidence of ability to write efficiently.

Focus on the Ability to Solve Problems

Narrative cover letters strategically position candidates to be successful by framing them as characters who have likely faced some sort of challenges and are now on their way towards solutions. You can highlight your critical thinking and resiliency by sharing stories of times when you've identified a problem, created a solution for it, and saw the desired outcome.

You Want to Be Remembered

In a sea of generic cover letters, a narrative approach will make your application stand out. Stories are inherently memorable because they engage the reader's imagination and emotions. When hiring managers read a narrative cover letter that resonates with them, it leaves a lasting impression, increasing the likelihood of you being shortlisted for an interview.

**CHAPTER 4:
WRITING
YOUR
NARRATIVE
COVER
LETTER**

Identifying Your Unique Story

Reflect on your career and the experiences that have built you, including obstacles overcome and principles upheld. Think about a few times when things went very well due to your talents, who you are fundamentally as a person and what drives you.

Steps to Identify Your Story:

1

Reflect on Your Journey: Consider key experiences, turning points, and achievements in your career. What stories best illustrate your skills and values?

2

Find Themes: Focus on the things that seem to keep happening or occurring and which relate to what you are striving for. These are the themes your narrative will be built upon.

3

Structuring Your Cover Letter: After you have your story, now it is time to properly structure the cover letter. A neat narrative provides a smooth flow, clarity and interest while the reader navigates through your journey.

Narrative Cover Letter Format

1. Hook: A sentence used as a grabber to pull the reader into your story.

"Growing up, I used to spend countless nights stargazing and dreaming of traveling the universe as a child. My curiosity drove me into the field of aerospace engineering, and I have been fortunate enough to make dreams come true.

2. Content: Pen down your story with background, challenges and how you utilize the expertise acquired to get through it.

Example: "While at XYZ Company, I managed the project to develop a revolutionary satellite technology. We had many technical challenges to solve, but my excitement for innovation and team-building allowed us to create something that surpassed everyone's expectations.

3. Connect: Use your story as a narrative thread so they

understand why you relayed certain experiences and how it relates to the job .


Sample: My ability to lead cross-functional teams and manage complex problem solving are in perfect harmony with the Project Manager position at ABC Corporation. I'm eager to add value to what you're doing!

4. Conclusion: In a few words, simply recap those qualities and show your passion for the role.

Example: "I'm excited to put my experience and love for aerospace engineering to work on ABC Corporation's forward-thinking projects. Let's discuss how I could contribute to your team.

Pick an Engaging Narrative: Pick a story that relates to the job you are interviewing for and truly highlights your strengths. Ensure that you are listing the skills and qualities, which an employer is looking for.

**CHAPTER 5:
NARRATIVE
COVER
LETTER
EXAMPLES**



**NARRATIVE COVER
LETTER EXAMPLE #1**

**MARKETING
MANAGER**

From Award-Winning Campaigns to Unmatched Results: My Marketing Journey

[1. Start with a Hook]

Dear Hiring Manager,

It was on a cold autumn morning when I first realized that my calling was to tell stories. Standing on the stage at a National Marketing Conference, I watched the audience's response to the campaign me and my team prepared. Later that day, our campaign won a prestigious award; however, at the moment, it was more important for me that the story had been understood and appreciated. Since that day, I have a burning passion for narrating and creating stories that resonate and engage with people. Now, I wish to bring this passion to your team at (ABC Company).

[2. Tell your professional story]

I have been working in marketing for ten years, and I have seen how the industry has changed which why I continuously evolve and hone my craft. I began my career at (XYZ Agency) where I helped to rehabilitate a bankrupt brand. Using my storytelling strategies and developing creative marketing campaigns, I revamped the struggling brand's image. Each role I've taken since has been a stepping stone in my journey to marketing greatness. The market analysis, consumer behavior, and digital marketing skills obtained at every role have built me into a professional who possesses flexibility and who can adapt to new challenges and drive successful outcomes.

[3. Highlight your achievements]

At (DEF Company,) I run a project that has increased the online customer engagement of our client by 250% during the first six months, using SEO, targeted content strategies, and SMO. The client's sales have increased by 30%, and the rebranding of the client, successfully conducted by me, has resulted in a market share increase of 15 percent.

[4. Explain why you're a fit]

The position of Marketing Manager at the (ABC Corporation), a company that is known for its innovative approach, caught my attention immediately. I have observed, with a great appreciation, how you introduced augmented reality as a fresh progressive idea into the consumer experience. My background in creating engaging and forward-thinking marketing strategies aligns perfectly with (ABC's) vision, and I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to your continued success.

[5. Close with confidence]

I am looking forward to the possibility of contributing my enthusiasm and my unique combination of experiences and skills to your team. I am confident that my passion for storytelling combined with my proven record of successful marketing campaigns and its strategic planning make me a valuable asset to your team. To schedule an interview with me, please call (123-456-7890) or email (marketingpro@gmail.com). Thank you for considering my application.

Warmest regards,

LaVonne James

LaVonne James

A man with a beard and short brown hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is smiling and talking on a grey mobile phone. He is sitting at a wooden desk in an office environment. The background is slightly blurred, showing office partitions and windows.

NARRATIVE COVER LETTER

EXAMPLE 2: ACCOUNTANT

Bringing Numbers to Life: My Passion for Accounting Excellence

[1. Start with a Hook]

Dear Hiring Manager,

Want to know one of the best things about numbers? *They can change everything.* My journey as an accountant began when, during my college years, I completed an internship at a small nonprofit and saw how access to funding could change or save lives. Since then, I have made numbers my life, and I want to continue helping organizations and local communities overcome financial challenges as a Senior Accountant at XYZ Corporation.

[2. Tell your professional story]

Career-wise, I have faced various challenges inherent to the accounting sphere, and I mastered them with pleasure. I joined ABC Accounting Firm as an entry-level accountant and rapidly climbed my career ladder to the position of a senior employee. One of my first clients was struggling with far too many financial processes in place, so my job was to streamline them. As a result of my efforts, the company reduced costs by 20% and started working more efficiently. I have constantly improved my financial analysis, auditing, and compliance skills, and each new job has provided me with a fresh perspective and the understanding that I can work in any accounting environment.

[3. Highlight your achievements]

While at DEF Company, I implemented a new accounting software system for improved accuracy that saved the company over \$500k annually. Moreover, I contributed to risk management by proactively identifying and rectifying potential financial inaccuracies at their inception point—helping support the accurate reporting of all our accounts. These quantifiable accomplishments demonstrate my proven track record of delivering tangible ROI and overall value to any company.

[4. Explain why you're a fit]

I am extremely interested in the Senior Accountant position at XYZ Corporation due to your dedication for innovation and overall quality of financial management. I have been following the impressive growth of XYZ, and I am impressed by your proactive way of doing business. With a career based on creating streamline accounting procedures and upholding the most ethical financial standards, I am eager to assist XYZ in reaching its targets. I am anxious to contribute to your continued success.

[5. Close with confidence]

I look forward to offering my experience and abilities with the XYZ Corporation. I am sure that my passion for numbers combined with the evidence of effective financial solutions make me a benefit to your team. I am very much looking forward to the chance of talking with you about how my background and skills could contribute to XYZ Corporation. I can be reached at aceaccountant@gmail.com. Thank you for considering my application.

Warmest regards,

LaVonne James

LaVonne James

Chapter 6: Challenges And Solutions



**CHALLENGES
AHEAD**

Crafting a narrative cover letter can present challenges, such as maintaining conciseness, ensuring relevance, and balancing professionalism with creativity. Here are some tips to overcome these challenges:

Challenge: Keeping it brief

Solutions: Tell one or two important stories that illustrate what you do well. Be succinct in the narrative.

Challenge: Relevance

Solution: Customize your story to a specific job and/or company. Highlight experiences and skills that pertain to the role.

Challenge: Professionalism versus Creativity

Solution: Storytell with Professionalism
Use storytelling to showcase your personality while maintaining a professional tone. Ensure your narrative aligns with the company's culture while still getting your audience involved and interested.

Through storytelling, you can engage your audience in a way that really captures their attention. Sharing your story and what you have been through creates a connection outside of qualifications, making people relate to who you are as person rather than another resume in the stack.

Ways of Mastering Engaging Storytelling

1. Paint a Picture: Use vivid language and descriptive words that help the reader see, and feel, as if they were there when it happened.
2. Use Emotions: We all connect through emotions and finding a way to make your personal stories resonate with common values and experiences is fine storytelling.
3. Build a Story Arc: Set up your content so that it has an introduction, body and conclusion to take readers along in the journey.



Chapter 7: Advice & Best Practices

The Pros And Cons Of Story Cover Letters

A well-written narrative cover letter is a delicate balance between creativity, relevancy and professional skill.

The Do's:

- **Authenticity:** This involves weaving personal stories into answers, as a reflection of real experiences and values. Be authentic to create trust and credibility.
- **Customize** your story for the job and company you're applying to. Emphasize every relevant skill and related experience your employer will be happy to know.
- **Get To The Point:** Your readers need to stay engaged, so keep the story brief– no more than a page.
- **Clear Language:** Write in plain and engaging language. Remember to steer clear of jargon or technical terms.

Don't

- **Drown in Details:** Don't pour endless details into your story. Optimize the elements of your story for the greatest impact.
- **Use Cliches:** You've found a great way to tell your story, so don't use cliches that will make your narrative less unique.
- **Ditch Proofreading:** Make sure your cover letter is typo-free.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Embracing Your Unique Story

The truth is your story can differentiate you when employers have to choose between candidates with similar experiences. Own what you have been through; own who and where you are right now in life. What makes each one of us unique is OUR STORY! Let storytelling lead the way to communicate your exceptional journey with conviction and magnetism.

Further Steps in Branding Yourself

Review Your Journey: Always review your path by referring back to what you have done, as it can provide perspective that illustrates how far you've come in your career journey.

Communicate Your Brand Story Consistently: Make sure that your brand story is being communicated in the same way on all channels and interactions.

Hone Your Storytelling: Practice, learn, and get feedback on your storytelling techniques.

Final Consideration

Narrative cover letters and storytelling are both excellent ways to craft a successful job application as well as create an epic personal brand. Narrative cover letters and storytelling are powerful tools that can transform your job application and personal brand. By embracing your unique story and leveraging storytelling techniques, you can create a lasting impression, connect with your audience, and unlock new opportunities in your career.

Need Help Developing Your Narrative Cover Letter?

Ready to Get Started? Click my Image Below to Book a FREE Consultation



CAREER BRANDING STRATEGIST
WWW.GETABETTERJOB.WORK

LaVonne James

LaVonne is the founder of Get a Better Job where she helps people secure better jobs with her proven high visibility/low competition method. She spent 15 years working at top NYC public relations agencies where she branded companies; now, she brands and packages people so they are known for their unique skills, productivity, value, and contributions in the workplace.