

“How To Get Your Message Opened & Read”

Before you sell yourself at the interview, you’re going to need hiring managers calling you to request interviews, right? And if they don’t open and read your message, they won’t be calling you, will they? That’s why you need to know the secrets to getting your message opened and read. And that’s the topic of the Special Report.

These techniques are proven to increase response. They’ve been tested by the best direct response marketers over a long period of time and they’re still being used today for one simple reason...they work!

Certainly you can use one or more of these ideas to boost the response to the messages you send out as part of your job search campaign.

First of all, let’s be clear on what I mean by your message. Your message is your cover letter and resume. And the purpose of your message is to get an interview...right?

Surely you don’t assume your message is opened and read just because you sent it...do you? I hope not. That could be job search suicide.

Did you notice the title of this Special Report refers to getting your “message” opened and read...not your letter? Good, because there’s more than one way to get your message delivered. We’ll focus on the following methods:

1. Fax
2. Electronic Mail
3. Snail Mail

In doing your research, you’ll generally find the contact name, mailing address, fax number, and/or an email address of the prospective employer. You should also have a phone number, but you already know how to use a telephone...right?

It would be best to gather every possible means of contacting the prospective employer. This could mean having multiple contact names, email addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, etc. I’ll tell you why in my Special Report **“Secrets To Doubling Your Response Rate”** which comes with the Deluxe Killer Cover Letter Package (along with X more Killer Cover Letter Ideas.)

For information on the Deluxe Killer Cover Letter Package, click here or visit <http://www.>

In this Special Report, we'll take a contrarian approach to getting your message opened and read. That means we'll look at what everybody else is doing...and then do the opposite. Your message will look different. Being different attracts attention and increases the chances your message is opened and read. And that's what you want...right?

Getting Your Message Opened

Fax

Obviously, if you fax your message it's already opened so you'll only be concerned with getting it read which we'll cover in the next section. By the way, that's an excellent reason to send your message via fax. You also don't need to pay postage when faxing.

Fax machines are cheap. You can also set up an account with a service like MyFax and use your computer to send and receive faxes. Your first month of MyFax is FREE. By that time, you should have a job. You can get more information on MyFax at <http://www.myfax.com>.

Another benefit of faxing your message is speed. I've gotten call regarding faxes before I even sent snail mail. If you're given a fax number, use it. And if you're not given a fax number, try to find it.

I'll show you several ways to find it in my Special Report ***"Simple Steps To Doubling Your Response Rate"*** and if you've got the Deluxe Package, you can watch a video tutorial where I'll show you step-by-step how to do investigative research to find additional contact information and increase your chances of getting the interview.

Click here for more details.

Electronic Mail

Regardless of the media you use to deliver your message (fax, eMail, or snail mail), it's possible your message could be deleted or thrown out before it's even read and we don't want that to happen...do we? So you need to do everything you can to make your message stand out among all the other messages. That'll increase its chances of being opened and read which gives you a better shot at getting the interview.

Let's look at emails first. How many emails do you get every day? A lot...right. Spam has become a pain in the neck to deal with. So the first step is to realize the decision maker you're trying to reach is a human being who has the same Spam issues you do.

Don't rely solely on eMail to deliver your message. First, you run the risk that the message will be intercepted by a spam filter and lost forever. Secondly, some people

don't even use email. And finally, it's more difficult to grab attention with an email than it is with fax or snail mail.

But despite all that, eMail can be used effectively and should be a part of your marketing mix. Let's take a deeper look.

An Attention-Grabbing "Subject" Line

The best way to make your email message stand out among the rest of the messages in the hiring manager's email inbox is with an attention-grabbing "Subject" line.

Your subject line shouldn't be "My Resume & Cover Letter" or "Re: Your Business Analyst Position" or something boring like that.

When it comes to email, your "Subject" line is the attention-grabbing opening sentence you'd use in your cover letter. As a matter of fact, it'd be OK to use the same sentence.

Think about it. If you were a hiring manager, would you be more likely to open an email with the "Subject" line "Resume & Cover Letter" or one that said "Are You Tired Of Reading Boring Cover Letters?"

You'd be more likely to open the one asking a thought-provoking question that arouses your curiosity...wouldn't you? Of course you would. Because you're human...and so is the decision maker or hiring manager. The trick is to arouse enough interest or curiosity to entice the hiring manager to open and read your message.

You can get some great ideas from the other Special Report you received, ***"101 Killer Opening Sentences."*** Reading the killer opening sentences will stir your creativity and before you know it, you'll have several killer opening sentences of your own.

Here are a few more email "Subject" lines you can use:

- URGENT Message, Please Read Immediately
- Time-Sensitive Message, Please Read Now
- URGENT Message, Please Reply By [insert date or time]
- Have You Heard The News?
- Did You Get The Message?
- Have You Seen This?
- You Gotta See This!
- You're Not Gonna Believe This!
- FINAL NOTICE!
- A Million Dollar Idea about...
- An Amazing Secret about...

Make your “Subject” line short and attention-grabbing. This can be tricky because you want to grab the reader’s attention and arouse enough interest to get your message opened, but you only have so much space in a “Subject” line...right?

Special Characters

Given the limited space, there are several things you can do to attract attention.

You can use special characters. For example, you could put brackets around your “Subject” line [like this]. You could also use asterisks and capitalization such as ****IMPORTANT**** or **!!Urgent!!**

The Ellipse...

Given the limited space available, another trick you can use is the incomplete sentence with three dots indicating the rest is in the message. Here’s an example of one I received recently: “My \$10,000 wager (and how you win)...”

It worked because I opened it. I wanted to know about this \$10,000 wager and better yet, how I could win. That’s another way to entice the reader to take action and open your message. Make them feel like they’ll miss something important if they don’t read your message. And that’s the truth...isn’t it?

Re:

A message with Re: in the subject line draws attention because it appears to be in response to a message previously sent by the other person. Most email programs automatically attach the Re: prefix when you respond to an email.

But there’s no reason you can’t just put Re: in your original message...is there? It’s really become a widely recognized symbol to regular email users. Here are some examples for your subject line:

- Re: Finding the Perfect Candidate
- Re: An Amazing Discovery
- Re: Can I Let You In On A Secret?

Make sure you tie your “Subject” line into your message. The first subject line refers to the perfect candidate for the job, which is you, right? The next two take a different approach as they don’t directly refer to the job.

The amazing discovery could be that you are the perfect candidate as explained in your cover letter. And the secret could be that your qualifications fit the job perfectly.

You could even take it a step further by doing some research. Let’s say you have some type of certification related to the position. Maybe you’re a Certified Automotive Service

Technician (CAST) and you find a study that shows car owners whose cars are repaired by a CAST are 84% more satisfied with the quality of the work done and are more likely to do repeat business with the same mechanic the next time their car needs repairs.

Well, the secret could be that based on the results of that study, hiring a CAST would result in more satisfied customers and more repeat business. And you are a CAST!! That would be a pretty powerful reason to hire you, wouldn't it?

By the way, I made up the CAST designation and the study just as an example, but you should get the idea.

Whether you want to directly refer to the job or use a different tactic as in the last two examples above is a decision for you to make. There is no right answer. Different people respond to different things. All you can do is test various subject lines and see which ones get the best response. Then you can use those going forward.

What you shouldn't do is try to trick the hiring manager into opening your message with a "Subject" line such as "Re: Your Mother's Accident" or something like that. Your message will probably get opened, but you've also proven yourself to be dishonest. So use Re: to draw attention, but tie it in to your message.

FREE is Powerful (but not in eMail)

FREE is one of the most powerful words in direct response marketing (maybe the most powerful). However, you should not use it in your email "Subject" line (or in the body of the message either) because it's associated with spam.

Most spam blocking programs will immediately delete any message with FREE in the "Subject" line. If you'd still like to use that word in the "Subject" line, try using a character to separate the letters and fool the spam software such as f^ree or fr[^]ee.

The best thing to do is test different "Subject" lines to see which ones generate the best response. Over time, you'll become an expert.

To Summarize:

- Make your "Subject" line short and attention-grabbing
- Use special characters to stand out (i.e. *, [], ^, ?, etc.)
- Use three dots at the end of the sentence [...] to arouse curiosity
- DO NOT use the word FREE in your "Subject" Line

Snail Mail

Now let's move on to snail mail or letters. At home, you sort your mail over the trash can, don't you? You throw out what looks like junk mail and keep bills and anything that looks like a personal message, right? Keep that in mind.

When it comes to sending cover letters and resumes through the mail, getting your message opened shouldn't be a big problem because hiring managers have generally solicited this mail and are likely to open it.

So the challenge here is to stand out from the pile of other envelopes. If you can draw the hiring manager's attention to your envelope, you'll increase your chances of getting your letter opened and read first. And that means you'll be one of the first people called for an interview.

What's Everybody Else Doing?

What do you think most of the letters hiring managers get in the mail look like? They're plain white #10 envelopes (4 1/8" x 9 1/2"). And they're addressed with a laser printer. Either with the address typed directly on the envelope or on a label affixed to the envelope...right?

Remember that. It's important because now that you know what everyone else is doing, you can do something different to stand out and increase the chances of getting your letter opened and read.

Personal Message vs Blatant Marketing Message

Let's talk about the envelope itself first.

With regards to the envelope, there are two strategies. One is to make it look like a personal letter. Think about a letter you might get from a friend. The address is handwritten and it has a live stamp...right? So that's what you should use.

You can use your laser printer or a label if you want to. I know it looks better. But that's what everyone else is doing and your letter is less likely to get opened and read first, isn't it? Is your goal to have the prettiest letter or to have a letter that gets noticed, opened, and read? You'd rather have your letter opened and read, right?

How many other people do you think are taking the time to hand address their envelopes? Not many. If your handwriting is atrocious, have someone with good penmanship address your envelopes.

Of course, I know some people will argue that handwriting the address on the envelope looks unprofessional, like you can't afford a laser printer or you're too lazy to use one. Maybe. Maybe not. There is no right or wrong answer. Different people react

differently to the same stimulus (like a handwritten address). All you can do is test both methods and track the results to see which works best for you.

The other option is to blatantly write or stamp the outside of the envelope in an effort to get it opened. You can write on the outside of the envelope yourself or use one of the red stamps you can find at any office supply store. Stamps such as “First Class,” “Urgent,” “Important,” “Fragile,” “Photo Enclosed,” or “Do Not Bend.”

You’ve got to tie the stamp in with your message. In other words, if you stamp the envelope “Photo Enclosed, Do Not Bend,” you should include a photo in the envelope. And tie the photo in with your message.

It could be a photo of a key (as opposed to the actual key I used in my cover letter) or a photo of a happy customer if you’re applying for a customer service position. Say something like, “Here’s a photo of a smiling, happy, satisfied customer who’s sure to become a repeat shopper. If you’d like more customers like this, then you’ll want to read my important message.”

Pick one tactic or the other for your envelope. Either a personal looking message or an envelope loaded with “teaser-copy” on the outside. If you decide to go with the copy on the outside, go all out. It’s all or nothing...kinda like being pregnant. You’re either pregnant or you’re not pregnant. And your envelope should either be plain or loaded with attention-grabbing “teaser-copy.” There is no middle ground.

Size Matters

If everyone else is using a #10 envelope, you should use a different envelope.

A great way to get your letter noticed is to send an invitation-sized envelope, the kind you’d get if you were invited to a wedding. If you use the 4 3/8” x 5 3/4” envelope, you can fold regular letter size paper in half twice to fit perfectly inside the envelope.

You could also use the 6” x 9” which fits a letter size page folded in half.

Another strategy is to use the large 9” x 12” envelopes, but those are used by other applicants too.

You might try using a different colored envelope...something other than white.

A trip to your local office supply store will reveal no shortage of possibilities.

Special Delivery

If you really want to make sure your message is opened, send it Fex Ex or UPS. Have you ever not opened a package sent via Fed Ex or UPS? Exactly. It must be important.

Of course, you'll pay a few dollars extra for each letter or package so you'll have to decide if it's worth the cost.

A less expensive, but still effective alternative is to send your message using the U.S. Post Office's Express Mail service. They'll provide you with an envelope that stands out almost as much as a delivery from Fed Ex or UPS. But the U.S. Postal Service loses more mail than Fed Ex or UPS so consider that before making your final decision.

You can actually buy pseudo express mail envelopes at reasonable prices to make your message stand out if you don't want to pay for Fed Ex. You can find some examples at <http://www.responsemail.com>. There's a wide selection and the designs have been approved by the United States Postal Service. I've used them with great results.

Inside the Box

Now let's think outside the box. Your message doesn't have to be delivered in an envelope does it? I once got a message delivered in a pizza box...so the message was "inside the box." I've heard of messages delivered in everything from bank deposit bags to garbage cans to poster cylinders. Some of these ideas may not make sense for you, but I wanted to make you aware of them.

The key when using unique delivery containers is to tie your message in with them. The message I got in the pizza box wanted to be sure I got "my piece of the pie." Messages delivered in garbage cans say that if you ignore the message you might as well throw your money in the trash can and here's a trash can you can use.

Odd Postage

Another tactic is to use odd postage. You should use a live stamp or stamps. But you don't have to use a standard 37 cent stamp like everyone else does. The most used stamps are probably the ones with the US flag on them...right?

If you visit your local post office, you'll see that there are several other varieties of stamps to choose from with various themes. Why not use one of those?

You could also, use multiple stamps like a 23 cent stamp and a 14 cent stamp or some other combination. Remember, if your message doesn't get opened, it won't get read will it?

All we're trying to accomplish is to get the message opened. And if the postage stamps catch the eye of the opener, then they're more likely to open and read the message aren't they? That's the idea.

Lumpy Mail

Another great tactic used by direct response marketers is called “lumpy” mail. The idea is to put something in the envelope that arouses curiosity and practically forces the recipient to open the letter just to see what the lump is. It’s also called a “grabber” because it grabs the reader’s attention.

Think about a box of Cracker Jack. Do you remember eating Cracker Jack when you were a kid? You’d open the box and the first thing you’d do before you even ate the popcorn is to see what your secret prize was. You opened the box out of curiosity. And that’s exactly what we’re doing with the letter here.

Some ideas for lumpy mail are keys, coins, lifesavers, etc. You can get more ideas at www.lumpymail.com. Here again, the key is to tie the lumpy mail piece in with your message.

Here are some examples:

Key ➔ The “key” to explosive sales growth (for a sale position)

Penny ➔ I’ll track everything down to the last penny (for a financial position)

Lifesaver ➔ This letter could prove to be a real “lifesaver” if you’d like to quickly fill your vacant position with a qualified candidate. (any position)

Aspirin ➔ Has filling this position given you a headache? Here’s some aspirin for temporary relief. And my letter has some important information you’ll want to read in order to prevent the headaches permanently. (any position)

Band Aid ➔ Do you have lots of patients who need attention? Here’s a band-aid for all the cuts and scrapes. (healthcare)

I’m sure you can think of more ideas.

That should give you plenty of ideas to get your message opened.

To summarize, here they are:

- Either a Personal Looking Message or a Blatant Sales Message (Pick One)
- Different Envelopes
- Handwritten Address
- Fed Ex or UPS (or USPS Express Mail)
- Pseudo Express Mail Envelopes (www.ResponseMail.com)
- Unique Delivery Containers (Pizza Boxes, Bank Bags, etc. www.lumpymail.com)
- Odd Postage (multiple stamps)
- Red Stamps on the envelope (i.e. Urgent or Important)

- Lumpy Mail “Grabbers” (www.lumpymail.com)

Use as many of those ideas as you’d like to make your message stand out in the crowd.

Getting Your Message Read

Getting your message opened is worthless unless it’s also read and the reader takes action. Like picking up the phone to call you in for an interview...right?

An Attention-Grabbing Opening Sentence

Now that the letter is opened, you’ve got just a few seconds to grab the reader’s attention and pull him or her into your message. If the message is stale and boring, it’s less likely to be read. Wouldn’t you agree?

You need an attention-grabbing opening sentence. The only purpose of the first sentence is to get the reader to continue reading.

When you’re reading a newspaper or magazine, how do you decide which articles to read? You read the articles with the interesting headlines, right?

Think of your opening sentence as a headline. And put it in a large font so it looks like a headline. How many other applicants do you think are doing that?

For ideas on headlines, please read the Special Report ***“101 Attention-Grabbing Opening Sentences”*** that came with your purchase. If you still can’t picture what you’re opening sentence/headline should look like, go to the beginning of this Special Report and look at the title ***“How To Get Your Message Opened & Read.”*** That’s a headline.

The large font grabs your attention, doesn’t it? And it got you to read the message or you wouldn’t be reading this sentence. Take that idea and apply it to the message in your own cover letter and resume.

Drop Caps

Use a drop cap in the first paragraph of your message. Newspapers use drops caps effectively. Drops caps draw the eye and the eye is more likely to read what it’s drawn too. The “U” in this paragraph is a drop cap. As you look at the page, it attracts your eye like a magnet. Doesn’t it? And it almost forces you to start reading.

If you use Microsoft Word, choose “Format” from the drop down menu at the top of the screen, then select “Drop Cap” and you’re in business. It’s very simple. And it’s a very effective technique to get your message read.

Paper Power

What's everybody else doing? Most are sending their letter on white paper. Why not use different colored paper? Golden-rod, green, yellow, are good colors. Also, put your cover letter on one-colored paper and your resume on another colored paper. Otherwise your message looks like a three-page letter. Make the cover letter and resume stand out separately.

Or how about putting the resume and cover letter (a one-page cover letter) on the same piece of paper using both the front and back. That way they can't get lost or separated.

You could also use legal size paper. You can put more information and do a better job of selling yourself on the extra space.

Mark It Up

Mark up your letter. Circle important points. Underline or highlight important words or phrases. Write notes in the margins. Use arrows, stars, etc. Underline important words or phrases.

Use any means necessary to draw attention to important points and compel the reader to keep reading. Use colorful pens or markers. It might be ugly, but it sure stands out, doesn't it?

The Big Story

Spice it up. Put your opening sentence in big, bold letters across the top, like a headline to a newspaper story. Use your picture. As a matter of fact, why don't you just make the whole cover letter look like a newspaper article (see Deluxe Package for example)

To Summarize:

1. Attention-Grabbing Opening Sentence
2. Drop Caps
3. Different Colored Paper
4. Mark It Up
5. The Big Story

Test

There is no right or wrong answer when it comes to effectively using these proven strategies. The best thing to do is test the ideas you like and track the results to see what works best. Over time you'll figure out what works best for you.

All of these ideas may not be appropriate for your situation (or you may think they're not appropriate). The only way to find out is to use them and see what happens. Surely, you found one or two ideas you can use, didn't you?

Great! Now put your new knowledge into action right now while you're thinking about it. Send out a few messages before the end of the day. Nothing's going to change if you don't take action.

Thanks for reading this Special Report. Please send me your comments and the results of your implementation of these techniques.

To Your Extreme Success,

Robert Phillips

Robert Phillips