

WRITE AN INFLUENCE LETTER

- Write an Influence Letter. Do not write a thank you letter unless they did you a favor.
- The influence letter is often as or more important than the interview itself.
- An influence letter:
 - ✓ Is personal, that is, cannot be used for a different interview.
 - ✓ addresses points that you learned about only in the interview.
 - ✓ addresses areas that you forgot to bring up.
 - ✓ Addresses areas that you didn't do justice to in the interview.
 - ✓ addresses objections they raised to your candidacy in your questioning.
 - ✓ conveys your intention to follow up.

Influence the Outcome

- Do what it takes to overcome objections- e.g., write a proposal.
- Stay in touch if there's nothing right now.
- Get referrals from hiring manager.
- The purpose of the followup is to get a meeting- if you do the work, ask for the meeting.

Steve's Influence e-mail #1

Dear George,

Thank you for setting up the meetings with Dan, Robert, and Cathy. It was a pleasure to meet them all.

I left yesterday with a clearer picture of the position's requirements. I understand that the Admissions Director motivates and brings out the best in the Admissions staff, and relies on measurement techniques to support the sales strategy and identify gaps and opportunities. With this understanding in mind, I would like to reiterate what I bring to the position that others may not.

I offer a superior analytical ability when working with people, which has enabled me to successfully motivate, negotiate, build relationships and sell. I have a keen ability to listen to what is being both said and not said, articulate the key issues, and remain clear-eyed in both high-pressure and highly charged situations. A common trait of strong leaders is the ability to communicate effectively, and this is my competitive advantage.

I know from my own experience that you only succeed at what you measure, so I understand the importance of data analysis to the success of this position. I have previously analyzed sales and revenue numbers, particularly in my _____ business. I realize, however, this was not brought out in my resume. Therefore, I would like to demonstrate my ability in this area.

If you are amenable, I propose that I analyze some of the department's spreadsheets containing sales data and I will present my findings to you. I am happy to sign any confidentiality agreement, or feel free to alter the numbers if necessary.

Looking forward to setting us both up for success.

Regards,

Steve was a client of mine. At the end of the first interview, Steve found out what their objections were. We wrote his influence letter to emphasize his analytic skills. He included a proposal that they send him data and he would analyze it.. His proposal was accepted, he analyzed the data they sent him, then requested another meeting to discuss it.

Steve's Influence e-mail #2

Dear George,

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting with you on Thursday to discuss the findings of my analysis.

I'd like to expand further on our discussion of management approaches. I recently read a book based on the Gallup Organization's study of managers (entitled *First, Break All the Rules*), and felt that their findings reflect the strengths I would bring to this position. As the book states, "Great managers look inward. They look inside the company, into each individual, into the differences in style, goals, needs, and motivation of each person... These subtle differences guide them toward the right way to release each person's unique talents into performance."

This ability to "release each person's unique talents into performance" is a natural talent that I have honed throughout my professional career. As a Behavioral Change Counselor and Coach, I work with each person's temperament and learning style to guide them toward their goals. Numerous testimonials (available upon request) attest to my ability to help people reach their goals and even increase people's performance beyond what they initially thought was possible.

I also have a successful record with sales. I currently sell my counseling/coaching services with an over 80% close rate with phone inquiries. I have broken sales records at two different locations of the nationwide chain, **Center**, selling 4 week, 8 week and 12 week programs (not unlike selling educational programs). In my **Star** business, which I conceptualized, developed and ran, I successfully sold to both wholesale and retail customers, including Fortune 500 companies. This strong sales background combined with my managerial ability makes me uniquely qualified to deliver outstanding results to BCA.

I look forward to bringing my talents to BCA and making a substantial contribution to the bottom-line.

I hope you and your family had a wonderful time in D. C.

Best Regards,

Now Steve went from being rejected outright to being one of the top two candidates. But by again asking the "followup" questions at the end of the interview, he found that the President preferred the other candidate because he'd done this job before. So we wrote Steve's next influence letter to emphasize his unique competitive advantage-- his relevant skills that no other candidate could bring. The result? He got the job..

Another Influence Letter Example

It was a pleasure meeting you all on Friday to discuss the corporate sales openings. I left our meeting feeling enthused about the open positions, and believe I could add substantial value. I would like to expand on how my background would enable me to excel in several of the areas we discussed, that you indicated would be key to success in these positions.

Being Proactive and Generating Incremental Revenue

I have a track record of excellence in consultative sales-- meaning I have generated strong incremental returns from clients by 1) understanding their issues and needs, and 2) developing profitable solutions to their business problems that they might not have thought of. Just one of many examples of how this approach has worked for me and can support your goals; I sold \$240,000 worth of enterprise software to a leading Fortune 500 finance company, which represented incremental revenue that was five times what the customer originally budgeted for.

Underlying this and my other successes has been a proactive approach to generating revenue-- including a large number of outbound calls every day. Importantly, I believe that you only succeed in what you measure, and therefore ensure that I pay significant attention to metrics around forecasting and pipeline management.

Attaining Quota

My track record speaks for itself. I have surpassed quota every year for five years, while many of my sales colleagues were struggling. I believe that my proactive work ethic, strong relationship skills, and focus on metrics has combined to support my success.

Getting things Done in a Large Newly-Merged Organization

Having been through two mergers myself, I understand the potential for frustration as a newly merged company seeks to integrate it's operations. I have been very successful, however, at getting things done in this type of challenging environment. My strong relationship-building skills, patience, tenacity, and an ability to focus on the end-result without getting caught up in the "process", have all been key to my being able to generate stellar sales revenues in this type of environment.

Strategic vs, Commercial Accounts

I've been successful with both of these client bases, because of my strength in both acquiring "new logos" and developing incrementally profitable relationships with large, established clients. In fact, my track record of exceeding quotas, mentioned previously, was split 50/50 between acquiring new accounts and generating incremental revenue from existing accounts.

I look forward to continuing the conversation.

Susan, another client, sent this influence email after her first set of interviews for a Tech Sales position. The hiring manager credited this email with helping her to land the position.

Influence letter following implied rejection got client renewed interest

INITIAL EMAIL from the HIRING MANAGER TO MY CLIENT, REJECTING HER

Susan <MY CLIENT>,

We are moving quickly toward finalizing the process. Our recruiter has recently given us a substantial number of folks who are either in, or recently in, XYZ positions with key competitors. Many of these folks are coming to us with substantial contacts at firms like BigCo Annuities and other key firms we work with. My point is that we're narrowing our search down to folks who have done this exact job, with recent experience and current contacts. Pat or I will be back in touch in the event we end up expanding the scope of our search with a wider net. Thanks.

Anne <THE HIRING MANAGER>

EMAIL RESPONSE FROM MY CLIENT TO THE HIRING MANAGERS

Anne and Pat,

I appreciate your candor. From your note, it sounds like you are identifying some highly qualified candidates.

I would like to note, however, my blend of experience that uniquely differentiates me from the competition and that makes me very well positioned to be able to deliver outstanding results. In particular, please consider the following in your decision-making:

- I bring the client perspective: Coming from the client side, I understand more than others who have done the XYZ job what the client is looking for. When pitching a prospect at, for example, BigCo Annuities or a similar prospect, I would be able to leverage my insider knowledge of their budget, presentation and marketing needs to help close the deal.
- I get the difference between retail & sub-advisory wholesaling: Knowing how critical each meeting is for sub-advisory adds to my understanding of the partners' needs, and enhances my ability to sell to them.
- I bring a network of former colleagues: For example, at BigCo Annuities, the wholesaler relationships from my former retail wholesaling role would automatically instill confidence in others at BigCo to whom I'm partnering with.
- I am a low risk candidate-choice: My 24 years in the business, my proven track record, and my diversity of channel experience throughout my career (having worked in all three channels) should instill confidence that I will be able to perform above expectations for you, as I have for others.

I've appreciated our conversations over the last few months, and would be thrilled to work with such a top-quality company, for leaders that I hold in such high regard. I look forward to the possibility of continuing the conversation.

Warm regards,
Susan