



TiPPS Cover Letter Samples

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TASK: Look at the following job advertisement and then read the 3 sample cover letters. If you were an employer, which applicant(s) would you consider calling in for an interview? What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of each cover letter? (None of them is perfect, but identifying what's good and bad in each will help you identify the same in your cover letter). For help, read "TiPPS for Writing and Tailoring Cover Letters."

JOB AD:

UH EDUCATIONAL SPECIALIST III

class code: 92207, pay range P09

Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center/National Foreign Language Resource Center, College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature, Office of the Dean, full-time, federal funds, to begin approximately 9/15/99; annually renewable pending availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

Duties: Coordinate educational programs and professional development activities; develop and publicize programs, coordinate application and selection procedures and arrange support services for programs; facilitate projects in materials development, teacher training and research; supervise office personnel, manage databases.

Minimum Qualifications: MA degree in ESL, applied linguistics, foreign language education, or a related field; three years of progressively responsible work experience in second/foreign language education; experience in organization and management of educational programs; excellent communication and organizational skills; strong word-processing (Macintosh) and database (Filemaker Pro) skills; Internet experience (email account/alias management, WWW publishing).

Desirable Qualifications: high proficiency in at least one foreign language; language teaching experience; experience in developing foreign language teaching materials; experience in grant management and report writing.

Minimum Starting Monthly Salary: \$3277.00.

Inquiries: David Hiple, 956-2062.

Submit:

- 1) APT Application for Employment (UH form 64) (attached),
- 2) resume,
- 3) a statement outlining how you meet the minimum and desirable qualifications, and
- 4) three letters of recommendation attesting to job performance and personal character

SAMPLE A:

August 26, 1999

Personnel
SLTCC/NFLRC Ed. Specialist III
2545 McCarthy Mall, Bilger 101
University of Hawai'i
Honolulu, HI 96822

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find my resume. Upon reviewing my resume, I'm sure you will find that I am qualified for a number of positions related to language teaching. I have had over five years of teaching experience here in Korea, teaching students of various ages and ability. In addition, two years ago I was promoted to English Teacher Coordinator at the English conversation school where I had been teaching, which illustrates how effective I was as a teacher. Finally, I self-published a textbook as well as a study on the influence of the American military in towns with Korean military bases (copies available upon request).

I hope you will consider me for any positions you may have. Please contact me at the above address for a possible interview. I am eager to work with you in Hawai'i. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

XXXXX

SAMPLE B:

August 26, 1999

Dr. David Hiple
SLTCC/NFLRC Ed. Specialist III
2545 McCarthy Mall, Bilger 101
University of Hawai'i
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear Dr. Hiple:

I am applying for the Educational Specialist position at the SLTCC/NFLRC, and have attached the UH Form 64 (APT Application for Employment), my current curriculum vita, and three letters of recommendation

As my CV indicates, I received my Master's degree in ESL from Temple University's Tokyo school. One of the unique aspects of this program is its Weekend Seminar series, which invites experts from all over the world to do 14-hour seminars on an area of specialty. While at Temple, I took 9 credits of these seminars, from people such as Richard Schmidt, Sandra Savignon, Teresa Pica, and Paul Nation. I feel that the variety of perspectives these seminars provided have helped make me a more rounded teacher and administrator.

I have eight years of experience teaching English in Japan, to students aging from nine years old through senior citizens, and at levels from beginner through advanced. I have taught private lessons, at language schools, at a vocational school, and at a university. I primarily taught conversation, but also had courses in writing and reading. In all my conversation classes, I strived to lead more students toward taking more responsibility for their learning, by giving them more control over the topics and by teaching and practicing conversation and communication strategies. In writing classes, I focused on making students aware of aspects of creative writing (and giving them opportunities to "play" with these aspects), as well as working with them on writing essays on topics of their own choosing. Finally, in reading classes, I tried to use real materials (to the extent these were available) for practicing different skills. I also believe strongly in being a reflective practitioner, and keep a "teaching journal" on a regular basis.

In addition, I served three years as an administrator at the vocational school where I taught. In this role, I was in charge of hiring teachers, curriculum development, textbook selection, scheduling, and working with teachers to ensure that they were sharing lesson plans and teaching insights.

Finally, I am also interested in materials development. I am currently working on a writing textbook, which I hope to send to a publisher in the next few months. I would be happy to provide copies of textbook units, or any other teaching materials you might find useful to help you make a decision. Please let me know if there is anything you would like me to provide.

I would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience. Thank you again for your consideration.

Yours truly,

XXXXXXX

SAMPLE C:

August 26, 1999

Personnel
SLTCC/NFLRC Ed. Specialist III
2545 McCarthy Mall, Bilger 101
University of Hawai'i
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear David Hiple:

My name is Jim Yoshioka, and I am applying for the UH Educational Specialist III APT position (#92207). I feel certain that my previous educational, teaching, research, advising, administrative, and professional experiences (described in detail here and in my curriculum vitae and application), have well prepared me to successfully handle the job's duties, responsibilities, challenges, and possibilities and that, if given the chance, I can be a valuable, enthusiastic, and effective asset to your center and its mission. I have already served the NFLRC previously as a Graduate Assistant and co-author of Tech. Report #18, and I hope that I will have the opportunity to work with the NFLRC once again!

Considering the minimum and desired qualifications for the position, I meet them in the following ways. First of all, in terms of education, I graduated with an MA in ESL from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa this past May, my scholarly paper (an interpretive qualitative study focusing on workplace pragmatics) earning the department's Harry Whitten Prize for Scholarly Excellence. In addition, I also hold a BA in English (teaching emphasis) and a minor in Japanese from the University of California at Davis, these multiple perspectives on language education working together to better inform my teaching and curricular decision-making.

In terms of actual second/foreign language educational job experience, I worked for 3 years as an Assistant English Teacher (EFL) at 4 junior high schools in Ichihara City, Chiba Prefecture, Japan, where my main duties included researching, developing, and adapting communicative activities for the classroom to develop the students' English listening and speaking abilities, teaching 3-4 classes a day, helping with grading and test development as well as various school-wide events and activities, and holding city-wide teacher training seminars to improve the Japanese teachers' English ability.

More recently, I worked for 2 years as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (ESL) for the English Language Institute (ELI) at UH Manoa, where I taught both ELI 73 (Writing for Foreign Students) and ELI 80 (Advanced Listening & Speaking). My responsibilities encompassed the full range of curriculum development - conducting needs analyses in my classes; updating ELI course goals and objectives and developing professionally in departmental meetings; choosing appropriate textbooks; administering and rating placement exams and reporting the results to students; developing new materials and activities on my own and in collaboration with my colleagues; creating lesson plans and teaching my students with an ear to their needs and interests, with an eye to the research and multimedia technology available to enhance their language learning experience, and with the spirit of building on their strengths and improving their weak areas through collaborative group work and individualized feedback and attention from me; and finally, evaluation of all parts of the process. Besides these 5 years of progressively responsible work in foreign/second language teaching, I have also worked previously as an ESL writing tutor, a Japanese tutor, and a Macintosh lab assistant/writing tutor (which again reflect my educational background).

It is clear, however, particularly from looking at the NFLRC job's duties and expectations, that apart from having the appropriate type of background, having excellent organizational, administrative,

and communicative skills is of prime importance. I have held a number of jobs, both paid and voluntary, where I successfully brought those abilities into play. For example, as an Academic Peer Advisor for the Division of Education at UC Davis, I not only met regularly with students interested in the UCD teaching credential program (advising them about program prerequisites, applications, deadlines, scheduling, program options, general college requirements, etc.) but also, on my own initiative, developed a number of systems and resources to help the office and the advising sessions run more smoothly and effectively. These included developing and writing the division's first newsletter for teaching credential program hopefuls (full of information and important reminders), maintaining the mailing list for it, keeping records of students' visits and concerns for future advising purposes, and revamping, compiling, and editing out-of-date division handouts and references for more informative, up-to-date, and effective advising sessions. I received many compliments from advisees, staff, and faculty alike for my support services, and after I left, they told me they had to hire two peer advisors to take my place (which they did).

More recently, I have helped organize the *Literacy for Change: Community-Based Approaches* Conference in August 1997, using Pagemaker to create its registration materials and conference booklet under the direction of Dr. Kathy Davis (ESL). That very same summer, I also served as Production Manager (and actor) for the play *Katipunan: The Cry for Freedom*, where my duties included publicity and public relations, being a liaison between the director, assistant director, set designer, and costume designer, and organizing cast functions, scheduling, and so on.

And finally, for the past year, I have been carrying out writing research and administrative work for the Manoa Writing Program at UH Manoa including Placement Exam registration, administration, rating, database maintenance, and research; Writing-Intensive course designation and research; publication of the most recent issues of *Writing Matters*; website development and updating; participation in MWP Board Meetings as well as system-wide Written Communication meetings; research reports; and office responsibilities such as computer/server maintenance, answering faculty/student phone or in-person queries, and assisting staff with routine business.

Two final qualifications involve competency with computers and in a foreign language. In practically all of the jobs mentioned throughout my application, I have used Macintosh computers extensively (I have one at home as well), except at the Manoa Writing Program, where we use PCs. In terms of programs, I have worked with the following applications: Microsoft Word, Word Perfect, Pagemaker (word processing/publishing); SPSS, Foxpro, Excel, ISIS (database storage and analysis); Norton Utilities, Filemaker Pro, various anti-virus programs (file back-up and protection); Netscape, Telnet, Uhunix (pine, pico, aliases), HTML Writer (internet and WWW); and other miscellaneous programs such as Daedalus. As for foreign language proficiency, besides receiving a minor in Japanese (after 4 years of study), being a Japanese tutor, and teaching and living in Japan for three years, I also served as a Graduate Research Assistant for the Japanese Department at UH Manoa. For two years, I assisted Dr. John Haig with expanding, updating, revising, editing, and proofreading *Nelson's Japanese-English Character Dictionary* for its third edition. Other graduate assistants came and went, but I was continued through the end because of my good balance of accuracy and speed.

For these reasons, I believe I am prepared to handle the interesting challenges and demands of the job with service, a smile, and efficiency; all I ask for is the chance. I look forward to hearing from you, and thank you for considering my application!

Sincerely,

Jim Yoshioka