

HOW TO CRAFT YOUR  
**COVER LETTER**  
TO GET MORE INTERVIEWS



THE PRINCIPAL CENTER



# HOW TO CRAFT YOUR **COVER LETTER** TO GET MORE INTERVIEWS

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WITH JUSTIN BAEDER, PHD.





## Our Focus

In this workshop, you'll discover how to make the strongest possible case that you deserve an interview by writing a strong, competition-crushing cover letter, so you get more interviews for your next-level instructional leadership role.

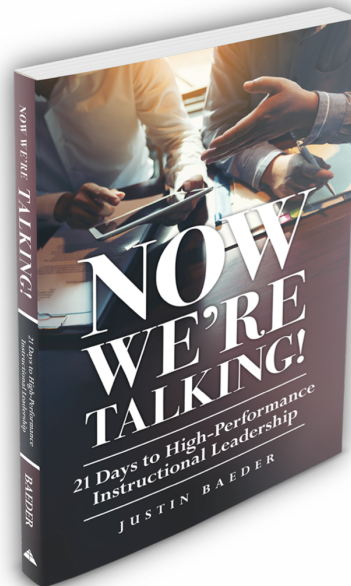


# What We'll Explore

- Why improving your cover letter is the fastest way to improve your odds of landing an interview—even when you're up against internal candidates with more experience
- The specific revisions that make the biggest impact—which you can make in just a few minutes
- How to triangulate what you say in your cover letter with what your references are saying in their recommendation letters
- The specific structure every good letter follows, and how to make it flow even if you aren't a great writer
- How to use the Cover Letter Generator Spreadsheet to draft or revise an evidence-based, fully customized cover letter



# Welcome!



AS FEATURED BY



EDUCATION WEEK

Principal





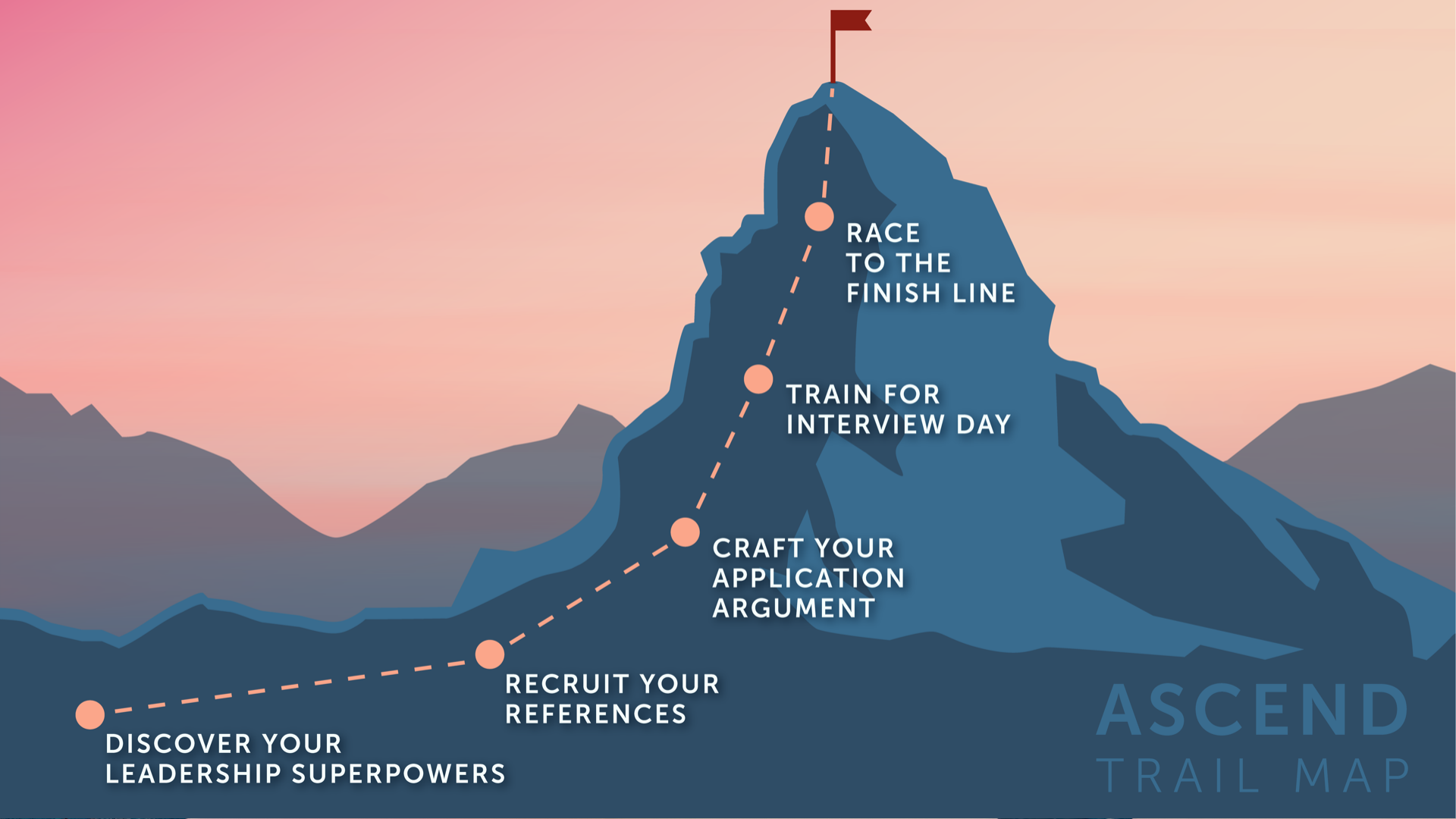


# The Cover Letter's Job

Your “perfect fit” argument







RACE  
TO THE  
FINISH LINE

TRAIN FOR  
INTERVIEW DAY

CRAFT YOUR  
APPLICATION  
ARGUMENT

RECRUIT YOUR  
REFERENCES

DISCOVER YOUR  
LEADERSHIP SUPERPOWERS

ASCEND  
TRAIL MAP

CRAFT YOUR  
APPLICATION ARGUMENT



ASCEND  
TRAIL MAP



# Your Application Argument

- Cover letter
- Résumé
- Recommendation letters
- Other application requirements, e.g. questions

# The Cover Letter's Job

The cover letter's job is to get you an interview:

- It's not a general philosophy of education
- It's not a rehashing of your résumé
- It's not a formality—it makes a huge difference
- It's an evidence-based persuasive essay



# The Good News

- You did this kind of writing in high school and college
- You have plenty of evidence, if you know where to look
- Most people won't take this very seriously—especially well-qualified and well-connected candidates
- You can improve your chances without waiting to gain more experience—simply leverage what you have

# Your Biggest Opportunity

You can't change the basic facts of your résumé in the short term:

- Your experience is “fixed”
- Your education is “fixed”

...but you can make dramatic changes to your cover letter—immediately.



# Quick Wins in the Cover Letter

- Use the full page
- Remove unsupported claims
- Add evidence of accomplishments
- Interpret the evidence for the reader
- Actually make the case for yourself



# Supporting Your Claims

Removing weak arguments that undermine your credibility

## Credibility Killers

- Every unsupported claim in your résumé introduces doubt in the reader's mind
- The stronger the claim, the more evidence it demands
- The shorter the claim, the more poorly supported it is



# The Strongest Claim



# The Strongest Claim

*“I am the best assistant principal in the district.”*

- The claim of **superiority** is the strongest kind of claim
- As a result, it triggers the most skepticism in the reader's mind

*Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence.*

# Awards As Evidence





## Awards As Evidence

*“I was honored to be chosen as the 2021 State Assistant Principal of the Year.”*

- Verifiable fact
- Independent—not a claim about yourself
- A direct claim of superiority

## Little Word, Big Claim

- Talented
- Collaborative
- Passionate
- Effective
- Organized
- Skilled
- Innovative

# Adjectives & adverbs

are the weakest type of  
claim in your cover letter

# Little Word, Big Claim

- Talented
- Collaborative
- Passionate
- Effective
- Organized
- Skilled
- Innovative

Don't just claim that you  
have these qualities—  
*demonstrate* them with  
evidence.



# Skills Are Claims

- Instructional leadership
- Budget management
- Dealing with student discipline
- Professional development facilitation
- Conflict resolution
- Communication
- Technology
- Data-driven decision-making

## Skills Are Claims

Avoid making unsupported claims that you have *skills* in particular areas. Instead, focus on beliefs or commitments.

# Unchallengeable Claims

Two types of claims can bypass the reader's skepticism:

- Claims of *experience*, which are easily verified via the résumé
- Claims about your *beliefs, values, and commitments*, which are “taboo” to question, and easily backed by evidence

# Claims vs. Skepticism

## Rely on:

- Claims with evidence
- Claims of experience
- Beliefs/values/commitments

## Avoid:

- Claims of superiority
- Adjectives
- Adverbs
- Skill claims





# Principles of Psychology

Write with your reader in mind

# The Primacy Effect

People pay the most attention to—and  
remember—what they read

**first**

## The Primacy Effect

If the reader encounters unremarkable information *first*, they'll assume the rest is unremarkable—so lead with your strongest evidence.

# The Recency Effect

- People remember the last thing they read almost as well as the first
- End on a strong note—recapping your argument for the reader



# Cognitive Load

- Reading application materials is cognitively demanding
- The reader is often fatigued from reading so many applications
- Fatigued readers skim
- Fatigued readers do not make the right inferences

# Cognitive Load—Implications

- Avoid confusing constructions
- Keep it straightforward and concise
- Connect the dots—spell out the implications of the evidence you provide
- Don't rely on the reader to make inferences



# Triangulation

Making all your application assets support the same argument



# The One-Page Problem





# The Argument

*“I deserve an interview.”*

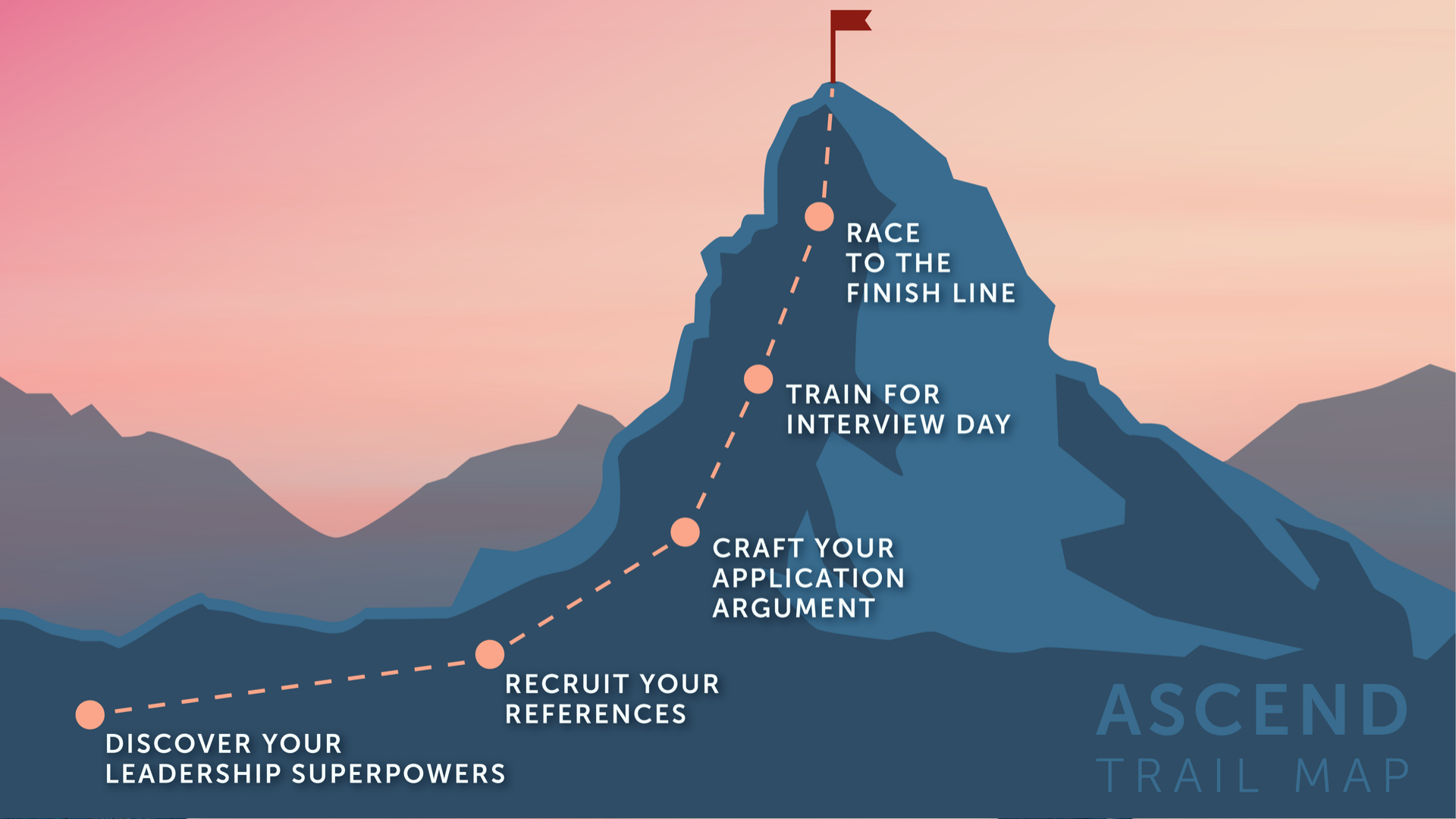
- Not something you say directly, but demonstrate
- You need a stronger argument than you can fit into a one-page cover letter

*How?*

# Mutually Supporting Evidence

Make the same evidence-based arguments for your candidacy in:

- Résumé
- Cover letter
- Recommendation letters
- Interview



RACE  
TO THE  
FINISH LINE

TRAIN FOR  
INTERVIEW DAY

CRAFT YOUR  
APPLICATION  
ARGUMENT

RECRUIT YOUR  
REFERENCES

DISCOVER YOUR  
LEADERSHIP SUPERPOWERS

ASCEND  
TRAIL MAP

# One Argument, Many Sources

- 1 recommendation letter → 1 paragraph in cover letter
- The more perspectives on the same issues, the better—strive to get 10+ good recommendation letters
- Ask for letters that speak to a specific issue or accomplishment



## Spell It Out

- Assume the reader is not really paying attention, and just skimming
- Make your argument *explicitly*
- Make your argument *repeatedly*

# Revisions

- Don't be afraid to ask for revisions to recommendation letters
- Explain the specific case you are trying to make
- Ask different references to speak to different issues



# Basics & Overall Structure

Writing your cover letter as a 5-paragraph persuasive essay



# 5-Paragraph Essay Structure

- Intro
- Body
- Body
- Body
- Conclusion

# Length

- Use the full page
- Don't waste space with a lengthy address block
- Reasonable margins— $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1"
- Reasonable font size—11 to 12pt
- Never exceed one page
- Leave room for your real signature



# How To Include Your Signature

- Write on paper with a nice pen
- Take a photo with your phone
- Use a filter to remove background
- Crop & resize to fit
- Place behind text

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Ball", is shown on a white background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Ball" clearly distinguishable.

# Header—Same As Résumé

Name & Highest Degree

Mailing address (optional)

Cell Phone | Email

Juanita Williams, M.Ed.

423 Maritime Circle, Lake Worth, FL 55555

555-555-5555 | Juanita.williams.edu@gmail.com

## What If I Don't Live Nearby?

- Omit mailing address
- Google Voice phone number forwarded to cell phone
- No need to include multiple phone numbers

# Email Address

- In-district: use district email
- Other organizations: use personal email
- Avoid side business email addresses, e.g.  
SmithEducationConsulting@...  
JacksonCoLabradoodles@...  
ElectrixWeddingDJ@...

# Separating Characters for Combining Lines

Recommended:

| (shift+backslash)

/ (forward slash)

• (Insert → Symbol)

Avoid:

\*

~

Other punctuation



# Recipient & Salutation

- Date (left- or right-aligned)
- No recipient address needed
- Identify recipient—individual or group
- Avoid “to whom it may concern” and “Dear Sir or Madam”

January 1, 2099

Dear Wayside High School Assistant Principal Hiring Committee,  
Dear Superintendent Gonzalez,  
Dear Ms. Johnson,

# Complete Walkthrough

- Cover Letter Generator Spreadsheet
- Key elements & rationale
- Examples



# Generator Spreadsheet

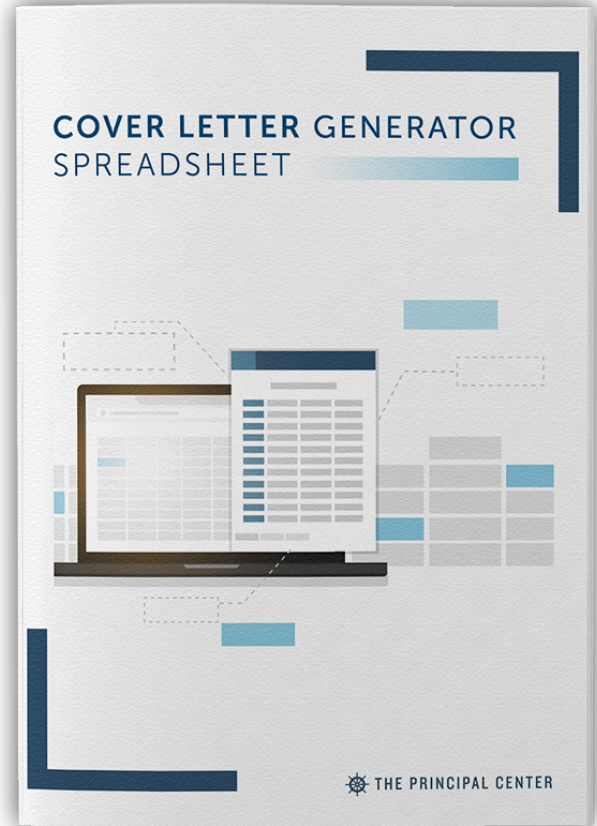
Overview & Instructions



# Cover Letter Generator Spreadsheet

7 tabs at bottom:

- Job Details
- Intro
- Body1
- Body2
- Body3
- Conclusion
- Output



**Job Details**

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# Job Details Tab

- Fill in your details
- Customize for each job
- Pulled into other tabs

My First Name	Justin
My Last Name	Baeder
Organization	Wayside School District
School/department	Badger Hill Elementary
Role/Position	Principal
Recipient/Addressee	Hiring Committee
Recipient Address Line 1	Wayside School District
Recipient Address Line 2	123 HQ Ave
Recipient Address Line 3	Wayside, IN 12345
Total years of experience	17
Years of experience at current level	2
Current job title article	an
Current job title, no article	assistant principal
Self-characterized role, no article	seasoned leader
Self-characterized role article	a

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



# Paragraph Tabs

- Review options
- Write your own
- Score the options
- Highest # in each section will be used

A	B
Rank:	CL1.1 Intro: ID & Interest
9	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am writing to express interest in the Principal position at Badger High School.
10	My name is Justin Baeder. Enclosed you will find my résumé for your consideration.
6	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am interested in the Principal position at Badger High School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Principal position at Badger High School.
19	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am writing to apply for the Principal position at Badger High School.
17	My name is Justin Baeder, and it is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for the Principal position at Badger High School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Elementary School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Elementary School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Elementary School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Elementary School.
Rank:	CL1.2 Intro: Experience Preamble
3	As a seasoned leader with more than 17 years of experience in the profession, I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and with more than 17 years of experience as an experienced seasoned leader with more than 2 years of service as an assistant principal and more than 17 years as an assistant principal, and I have spent the past 2 years as an successful assistant principal, and I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
9	As an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and with more than 17 years of experience as an experienced seasoned leader with more than 2 years of service as an assistant principal and more than 17 years as an assistant principal, and I have spent the past 2 years as an successful assistant principal, and I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
3	As an experienced seasoned leader with more than 2 years of service as an assistant principal and more than 17 years as an assistant principal, and I have spent the past 2 years as an successful assistant principal, and I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
10	With 2 years of experience as an assistant principal and more than 17 years as an assistant principal, and I have spent the past 2 years as an successful assistant principal, and I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
9	I have spent the past 2 years as an successful assistant principal, and I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
3	I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
1	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
5	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and for the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
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Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# Write Your Own Versions

- Red cells should not be edited
- Use green cells to draft your own wording
- Strive to come up with 3 original versions
- Score the results—highest score wins

A	B
Rank:	CL1.1 Intro: ID & Interest
9	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am writing to express interest in the Principal position at Badger High School.
10	My name is Justin Baeder. Enclosed you will find my résumé for your consideration for the Principal position at Badger High School.
6	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am interested in the Principal position at Badger High School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Principal position at Badger High School.
19	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am writing to apply for the Principal position at Badger High School.
17	My name is Justin Baeder, and it is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for the Principal position at Badger High School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Middle School Principal position.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Middle School Principal position.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Middle School Principal position.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Middle School Principal position.
Rank:	CL1.2 Intro: Experience Preamble
3	As a seasoned leader with more than 17 years of experience in the profession, I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
9	As an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and with more than 17 years of experience in the profession, I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
3	As an experienced seasoned leader with more than 2 years of service as an assistant principal, I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
10	With 2 years of experience as an assistant principal and more than 17 years as an experienced leader in the profession, I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
9	I have spent the past 2 years as an successful assistant principal, and I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
3	I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
1	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
5	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
3	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.
5	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and I am qualified to serve as the Principal of Badger High School.

# Output Tab

- Combines everything from other tabs
- Copy & paste as unformatted text into word processor
- Do not edit cells—they contain formulas that are easily broken

Hiring Committee
Wayside School District
123 HQ Ave
Wayside, IN 12345
March 12, 2021
Dear Hiring Committee,
My name is Justin Baeder, and it is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary. For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and I am prepared to make educational excellence the norm for all students. I believe my professional experience has prepared me to be precisely the kind of instructional leader you are looking for.
Working from the conviction that schools should be welcoming, caring environments, I am committed to ensuring that each student is known by name. I recently created a protocol to provide translation and interpretation services for families speaking other languages. As a result, our on-time graduation rate increased from 91% to 94% year-over-year. This experience has amply prepared me for success as Principal at Badger Hill Elementary. I believe that when leaders, teachers, and parents partner on behalf of student success, nothing is impossible.
As an emerging instructional leader, I believe the best way to improve student learning is to focus on teacher practice. I am committed to working with the school board to help improve teacher practice, at both the individual and department levels. One project that I'm particularly proud of is our decision matrix, which ensures that all staff have a voice in school decisions that affect them. I met with the teacher to share my concerns, get his take on the challenges he was experiencing, and develop a plan of action. Our updated matrix ensures that each decision gets input from the relevant stakeholders, and in a follow-up survey, 83% of staff reported that they have a voice in decisions that affect them. This experience is indicative of the kind of impact I will have as an instructional leader at Badger Hill Elementary.
Throughout my career, I have exemplified a commitment to ensuring that families have a seat at the table, so we can make the best decisions on behalf of students together. I have strived to increase parent involvement by developing an internship program with area businesses, giving our 11th and 12th graders valuable work experience within the school day. Teachers reported a much deeper understanding of PBIS as a result of the training, and office referrals have decreased by 28%. As a candidate for the Principal role at Badger Hill Elementary, I see tremendous opportunities to apply this experience and passion for developing partnerships.
I see it as my responsibility to provide every student with the tools and supports they need to learn in a safe, supportive environment that fosters relationships that will last a lifetime. I believe my skills and experience make me the ideal candidate for this role. As you review the enclosed résumé and recommendation letters, you will see further examples of the work I've done over the past 17 years. I hope to have the opportunity to interview for this position and give the hiring committee further perspective on who I am as a leader and how I might be of service. Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,
Justin Baeder

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## Section By Section

In this next section, I'll walk you  
paragraph by paragraph through the  
Perfect Fit Cover Letter™





# The Intro Paragraph

Hook the reader with confidence



# CL1: Intro Paragraph

## General Goals

- Express interest in the specific position
- Give a sense of who you are
- Give a sense of the type of experience you have
- Express confidence in fit
- Mention career changes, relocations, etc.
- Avoid making too many claims

# Salutation

Greet the specific group or individual that will be reviewing application materials:

- Dear Wayside High School Assistant Principal Hiring Committee, ...
- Dear Dr. Benson, ...
- Dear Superintendent Gonzalez, ...

Avoid:

- To Whom It May Concern
- Dear Sir or Madam

# Reason for Search

- FMLA leave—children, health, relative care
- Career change
- Finishing doctorate
- Geographic relocation
- Change of sector
- Change of employer

# Framing Your Experience

State your experience at this level or in the profession:

- If you have more than 30 years of experience, you may want to focus on experience at the current level, to avoid ageism:

*“I have served as a high school principal for the past 12 years...”*

- If you have less than 3 years at the current level, you may want to focus on total experience:

*“As an instructional leader with more than 7 years of experience in the profession...”*

# Explaining Other Issues

- Time away from the profession
- Stepping down to a lower-level role
- “Dunk Tank” situations that need to be explained



## Common Mistakes—Intro Paragraph

- Not customizing for the district & role
- Not making a direct claim about fit
- Adding too many adjectives & adverbs
- Not giving a sense of who you are
- Not giving a sense of the type of experience you have

# Intro Tab

- Review options in each section
- Write 3 of your own
- Score them all, lowest to highest
- Highest will be used

Rank:	CL1.1 Intro: ID & Interest
9	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am writing to express interest in the Principal position at Badger High School.
10	My name is Justin Baeder. Enclosed you will find my résumé for your consideration.
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19	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am writing to apply for the Principal position at Badger High School.
17	My name is Justin Baeder, and it is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for the Principal position at Badger High School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Elementary School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Elementary School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Elementary School.
0	My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside Elementary School.
Rank:	CL1.2 Intro: Experience Preamble
3	As a seasoned leader with more than 17 years of experience in the profession,
9	As an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and with more than 17 years of experience in the profession,
3	As an experienced seasoned leader with more than 2 years of service as an assistant principal,
10	With 2 years of experience as an assistant principal and more than 17 years as an assistant principal,
9	I have spent the past 2 years as a successful assistant principal, and
3	I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and
1	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
5	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
3	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and
5	For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# Intro Tab

- CL1.1 Intro: ID & Interest
- CL1.2 Intro: Experience Preamble
- CL1.3 Intro: Anticipation
- CL1.4 Intro: Impact Claim
- CL1.5 Intro: Fit Claim

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL1.1 Intro: ID & Interest

- State your name to anchor it in the reader's mind—Primacy Effect
- Explicitly express interest/enthusiasm
- Name the position/location to associate it with yourself in the reader's mind
- Note specific pool or role

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL1.1 Intro: ID & Interest

- My name is Justin Baeder, and I am writing to express interest in the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary.
- My name is Justin Baeder. Enclosed you will find my résumé for your consideration for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary.
- My name is Justin Baeder, and I am interested in the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary.
- My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary.
- My name is Justin Baeder, and I am writing to apply for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary.
- My name is Justin Baeder, and it is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary.
- My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside School District Principal pool.

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



## CL1.2 Intro: Experience Preamble

- Position yourself as experienced (you are!)
- Make the claim of experience in passing
- Provide specific evidence—years
- Characterize yourself:

instructional leader, educator, lead learner, educational leader, senior leader, professional, aspiring principal, emerging leader, aspiring leader, seasoned leader, administrator, executive, teacher leader, veteran educator

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL1.2 Intro: Experience Preamble

- As a seasoned leader with more than 17 years of experience in the profession,
- As an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and with more than 17 years of experience in the education profession,
- As an experienced instructional leader with more than 2 years of service as an assistant principal,
- With 2 years of experience as an assistant principal and more than 17 years as an educator,
- I have spent the past 2 years as an successful assistant principal, and
- I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and
- For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL1.3 Intro: Anticipation

In 4+ words, you can convey:

- Excitement
- Readiness
- Momentum

...and cue up the impact claim you're about to make.

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL1.3 Intro: Anticipation

- I am eager to
- I am excited to
- I am thrilled at the opportunity to
- I am ready to
- I am looking forward to the opportunity to
- I am ready for a new opportunity to
- I am excited at the prospect of working to
- I am looking forward to serving in a role where I can
- I am seeking a role that enables me to
- I am poised to
- I am prepared to

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL1.4 Intro: Impact Claim

- Make a claim about the primary contribution you will make in the role
- Typically this impact is on student learning, but adjust as needed
- Positions you as a leader focused on certain priorities
- Can be customized to the school's needs
- Many to choose from
- Customize terminology to your local area
- Use the examples as inspiration

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



# CL1.4 Intro: Impact Claim

- close opportunity gaps for students in underserved groups
- help all students achieve at high levels
- make educational excellence the norm for all students
- help culturally and linguistically diverse students achieve at high levels
- help all students feel connected, cared for, and confident as learners
- have an impact on student learning
- improve teaching and learning
- have an impact on teacher practice and student learning
- have an impact on school culture, climate, and student learning
- develop systems and processes that meet the needs of struggling students
- create memorable learning experiences that engage all students
- increase academic achievement and improve school culture and climate
- uphold the high standard of excellence [school] is known for
- help teachers and students achieve their full potential
- engage all staff in preparing students for college, careers, and citizenship
- lead a turnaround in teaching and learning
- create a supportive, welcoming environment that sets students up for success

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL1.5 Intro: Fit Claim

- Argue that you are a good fit for the role
- Explain why your experience is relevant

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL1.5 Intro: Fit Claim

- I believe my skills and experience make me ideally suited for this role.
- I have the drive, commitment, and skills to make a dramatic impact on student learning in this role.
- I believe my values, skills, and work ethic make me an excellent fit for Wayside School District.
- I believe my professional experience has prepared me to be precisely the kind of seasoned leader you are looking for.
- I believe my professional background makes me an ideal fit for the Principal role.
- My track record as a 17-year veteran of the profession speaks to the contribution I am prepared to make to Wayside School District.
- Based on my research and the reputation of Wayside School District, I believe I would be an excellent fit for the Principal role at Badger Hill Elementary.
- I have spent my career working in settings similar to Badger Hill Elementary, and believe I would be an excellent fit for the Principal role.
- I have more than 17 years of experience working with similar student populations, and believe I would be an excellent fit for the Badger Hill Elementary community.
- As a veteran instructional leader, I believe I have the expertise and experience to have a sizeable impact as Principal at Badger Hill Elementary.

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# Intro Example 1

*My name is Justin Baeder. Enclosed you will find my résumé for your consideration for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary. As an instructional leader with more than 17 years of experience in the profession, I am prepared to help culturally and linguistically diverse students achieve at high levels. I have more than 17 years of experience working with similar student populations, and believe I would be an excellent fit for the Badger Hill Elementary community.*

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## Intro Example 2

*My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary. As an experienced instructional leader with more than 2 years of service as an assistant principal, I am prepared to have an impact on teacher practice and student learning. I have spent my career working in settings similar to Badger Hill Elementary, and believe I would be an excellent fit for the Principal role.*

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



# Intro Example 3

*My name is Justin Baeder, and I am excited to submit my application for the Wayside School District Principal pool. I have served as an assistant principal for the past 2 years, and I am prepared to help teachers and students achieve their full potential. My track record as a 17-year veteran of the profession speaks to the contribution I am prepared to make to Wayside School District.*

Job Details

**Intro**

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



# 1<sup>st</sup> Body Paragraph

Student Focus

# Body Paragraphs

- Typically 3, but not a strict rule
- All roughly equal in length
- Cluster related evidence together
- Internal structure of a body paragraph:
  - Soft claim about yourself, e.g. belief/commitment
  - Evidence supporting claim
  - Interpretation/impact
  - Recap of claim of fit

## CL2: Body1 Paragraph

### General Goals

- Recommended focus: students
- Give a sense of your beliefs & approach to students
- Provide evidence supporting your argument
- Share specific results whenever possible



# How Will You Help Students?

- AP role—culture, climate, individual success, discipline, relationships
- Principal role—right to a high-quality education, relationships, climate
- Central office role—systems, right to a high-quality education, student learning as the bottom line



## CL2: Body1 Paragraph

### Common Mistakes

- Not talking about students
- Platitudes without specifics
- Experience without results
- Applying for the job you already have rather than the job you want

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL2: Body1 Paragraph

- Review options in each section
- Write 3 of your own
- Score them all, lowest to highest
- Highest will be used

Rank:	CL2.1 Student Focus - Belief Preamble
5	Driven by the belief that
19	As a leader committed to the belief that
9	As an antiracist educator driven by the conviction that
24	Working from the conviction that
6	Motivated by my conviction that
2	As an equity-focused leader who believes that
24	Because I hold a deep conviction that
0	Because I hold a deep conviction that
0	Custom
0	Custom
Rank:	CL2.2 Student Focus - Belief Statement
9	all students can learn
9	schools should be welcoming, caring environments
8	we must meet the needs of the whole child
7	students must have their fundamental needs met in order to learn
0	all students deserve to be supported in meeting high expectations
11	students need us to work as a team to help them prepare for college, careers, and citizenship
21	students learn best when their social-emotional needs are met
8	all students can learn at high levels when provided with the appropriate supports
11	students deserve our very best
20	every child deserves to be known and cared for
10	students deserve an environment that both supports and challenges them
0	students deserve an environment that both supports and challenges them
0	students deserve an environment that both supports and challenges them
0	students deserve an environment that both supports and challenges them
Rank:	CL2.3 Student Focus - Commitment Claim
14	I am committed to creating a safe, learning focused environment for all students
6	I am committed to ensuring that each student is known by name

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.1: Student Focus - Belief Preamble

- A belief statement gives the reader crucial information about who you are as a leader
- It does not demand as much evidence as a direct claim
- It explicitly puts your experience into a larger context—you're a person with convictions, not just skills and experience

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL2.1: Student Focus - Belief Preamble

- Driven by the belief that
- As a leader committed to the belief that
- As an antiracist educator driven by the conviction that
- Working from the conviction that
- Motivated by my conviction that
- As an equity-focused leader who believes that
- Because I hold a deep conviction that

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.2: Student Focus - Belief Statement

- Articulate a core belief about students
- Customize for age of students
- Customize for geographic setting

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



# CL2.2: Student Focus - Belief Statement

- all students can learn
- schools should be welcoming, caring environments
- we must meet the needs of the whole child
- students must have their fundamental needs met in order to learn
- all students deserve to be supported in meeting high expectations
- students need us to work as a team to help them prepare for college, careers, and citizenship
- students learn best when their social-emotional needs are met
- all students can learn at high levels when provided with the appropriate supports
- students deserve our very best
- every child deserves to be known and cared for
- students deserve an environment that both supports and challenges them

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.3: Student Focus – Commitment Claim

- State what you're committed to doing OR
- State the outcome you're committed to creating
- Keep the focus on students

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.3: Student Focus – Commitment Claim

- I am committed to creating a safe, learning focused environment for all students
- I am committed to ensuring that each student is known by name
- I am committed to designing systems of support that set all students up for success
- I am committed to working as a team to provide our students with the resources they need for success
- I am committed to providing the academic supports that students need to stay on track for graduation
- I am committed to keeping students on track in both academics and attendance

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.4: Student Focus – Accomplishment Current Role

- Cue up a recent example of your work
- Give a sense of upward trajectory

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.4: Student Focus – Accomplishment Current Role

- In my current role as an assistant principal, I have
- As an assistant principal, I
- I recently
- While serving as an assistant principal, I
- In my position as an assistant principal, I have

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



## CL2.5: Student Focus – Accomplishment Active Verb

- Position your involvement in terms of creation, design, leadership, etc.
- Be honest about your role in teamwork
- Give yourself enough credit

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL2.5: Student Focus – Accomplishment Active Verb

- developed
- created
- obtained
- provided
- set up
- established
- arranged

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.6: Student Focus – Accomplishment Verb Object

- Identify what you led/built/designed
- Make it sound official—like a specific object, event, document, etc.
- This avoids weak wording such as “I worked on...” or “I tried to...”

## CL2.6: Student Focus – Accomplishment Verb Object

- a system
- a protocol
- a procedure
- a process
- a team
- a committee
- a partnership
- a grant
- an after-school program
- a multi-tiered system of support
- a curriculum
- a pilot project
- a summer program
- a professional development series
- a training for staff
- a staff training

## CL2.7: Student Focus – Accomplishment Impact

- Ensure that it's relevant to the job you're seeking, not just the job you have
- How did your accomplishment function to affect students?

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL2.7: Student Focus – Accomplishment Impact

- for monitoring student attendance
- for improving attendance
- to ensure that students stay on track academically
- to provide food and other resources to needy students
- to provide intervention and acceleration for students working below grade level
- to provide additional time for learning
- to ensure that all students receive rigorous, high-quality instruction
- to ensure that all students are reading on grade level
- to help students build the social-emotional skills they need to thrive
- to ensure that each student has a relationship with a caring adult who knows them by name
- to provide funding for professional development
- to provide funding for additional learning time
- to provide resources and materials for teachers
- to provide translation and interpretation services for families speaking other languages
- to ensure that no students fall through the cracks
- to enlist a team in providing wraparound services for students

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



## CL2.8: Student Focus – Result

- Be as specific as you can
- Most compelling: before/after data
- Use assessments, discipline/attendance data, survey responses, etc.
- Include numbers if you can

# CL2.8: Student Focus – Result

Format samples:

- As a result, student attendance increased from XX to XX from 2018 to 2019.
- As a result, math scores increased from...
- As a result, office referrals decreased from...
- As a result, out-of-school suspensions decreased by...
- As a result, on-time graduation increased by...

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.9: Student Focus – Future Commitment

- Explicitly connect this accomplishment to the work you'll do in the new role
- Convey a sense of readiness, relevance, and trajectory.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.9: Student Focus – Future Commitment

- I will bring the same commitment to the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary
- I look forward to continuing this commitment at Badger Hill Elementary
- This experience has amply prepared me for success as Principal at Badger Hill Elementary
- This exemplifies the approach I will take to the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

## CL2.10: Student Focus – Teamwork Belief

- We don't really have a full paragraph to devote to collaboration, so this is a great place to mention it as a priority
- OK to cut for space if you have more evidence you can use

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+

# CL2.10: Student Focus – Teamwork Belief

- When we work as a team, I believe we can equip every student for success.
- I believe that when leaders, teachers, and parents partner on behalf of student success, nothing is impossible.
- I believe that collaboration is crucial to our success, and I will bring a collaborative skillset and mindset to the role.
- My philosophy is that collaboration is essential to our success in meeting students' needs.

Job Details

Intro

**Body1**

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

+



# Body1 Example 1

*Because I hold a deep conviction that students deserve an environment that both supports and challenges them, I am committed to providing the academic supports that students need to stay on track for graduation. In my current role as an assistant principal, I have established a procedure to enlist a team in providing wraparound services for students. As a result, student attendance increased from 97.1% to 98.7% from 2018 to 2019. This experience has amply prepared me for success as Principal at Badger Hill Elementary. My philosophy is that collaboration is essential to our success in meeting students' needs.*

# Body1 Example 1

*Because I hold a deep conviction that students deserve an environment that both supports and challenges them, I am committed to providing the academic supports that students need to stay on track for graduation. In my current role as an assistant principal, I have established a procedure to enlist a team in providing wraparound services for students. As a result, student attendance increased from 97.1% to 98.7% from 2018 to 2019. This experience has amply prepared me for success as Principal at Badger Hill Elementary. My philosophy is that collaboration is essential to our success in meeting students' needs.*

## Body1 Example 2

*Because I hold a deep conviction that students must have their fundamental needs met in order to learn, I am committed to working as a team to provide our students with the resources they need for success . I recently established a committee to provide additional time for learning. As a result, our on-time graduation rate increased from 91% to 94% year-over-year. This experience has amply prepared me for success as Principal at Wayside High School. When we work as a team, I believe we can equip every student for success.*

## Body1 Example 3

*As an equity-focused leader who believes that students deserve an environment that both supports and challenges them, I am committed to ensuring that each student is known by name. In my current role as an assistant principal, I have created a multi-tiered system of support to provide translation and interpretation services for families speaking other languages. As a result, office referrals decreased by 52% from 2018 to 2019. This experience has amply prepared me for success as Principal at Badger Hill Elementary. I believe that when leaders, teachers, and parents partner on behalf of student success, nothing is impossible.*





# 2<sup>nd</sup> Body Paragraph

Instructional Leadership Focus

# CL3: Instructional Leadership Focus

## General Goals

- Give a sense of your instructional leadership philosophy
- Convey how you'd work with the admin/leadership team
- Share specific accomplishments in improving teaching & learning
- Recap relevance to the job you're seeking

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output



## CL3.1: Instructional Leadership Focus Common Mistakes

- Making yourself just another member of the team
- Describing activities/committees without describing their impact on results
- Describing duties rather than specific accomplishments

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.1: Instructional Leadership Focus - Instructional Leader Preamble

- Characterize yourself as a certain “kind” of leader (see “self-characterized role” field on Job Details tab)
- Blurs distinction between the role you have and the role you’re seeking

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output

# CL3.1: Instructional Leadership Focus - Instructional Leader Preamble

- As an instructional leader
- As a seasoned instructional leader
- As an emerging instructional leader
- As a teacher leader

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.2: Instructional Leadership Focus - Belief Statement

- This is a soft but powerful claim about who you are as an instructional leader
- Conveys your approach as well as beliefs

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

# CL3.2: Instructional Leadership Focus - Belief Statement

- I believe that improving teaching and learning is my most important responsibility.
- I believe my responsibility is to stay attuned to what teachers and students need to succeed.
- I believe my most important responsibility is to foster continuous improvement in teacher practice.
- I believe the best way to improve student learning is to focus on teacher practice.
- I believe teacher professional growth is the single most important factor in student learning.
- I believe teacher professional growth is the most direct path to improved results for students.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.3: Instructional Leadership Focus - Collaboration Commitment

- Reassurance that you won't be a lone-ranger leader
- Commitment to partnership

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output



## CL3.3: Instructional Leadership Focus - Collaboration Commitment

- I am committed to working alongside the school leadership team to
- I am committed to partnering with the leadership team to
- I am committed to collaborating with each staff member to
- I am committed to working with the school board to
- I am committed to working with the administrative team to
- I am committed to working closely with each principal to
- I am committed to partnering with district and state partners to

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.4: Instructional Leadership Focus - Improvement Action

- General set of improvement efforts
- Focused on instructional leadership

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.4: Instructional Leadership Focus - Improvement Action

- craft an agenda for improvement and provide the resources and opportunities teachers need to take their practice to the next level.
- support professional growth and have a greater impact on student learning.
- identify improvement priorities for each campus.
- identify the strengths and opportunities for improvement in every aspect of the school.
- help improve teacher practice, at both the individual and department levels.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.5: Instructional Leadership Focus - Accomplishment Example

- State a specific accomplishment
- Full sentence describing the overall project or effort

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output

# CL3.5: Instructional Leadership Focus - Accomplishment Example

Format samples:

- For example, I recently partnered with our district ELL department to provide SIOP training to all teachers and instructional assistants.
- In my current role, I recently led a team exploring John Hattie's Visible Learning strategies.
- I recently worked with a teacher who was struggling with lesson planning and classroom management.
- One project that I'm particularly proud of is our decision matrix, which ensures that all staff have a voice in school decisions that affect them.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.6: Instructional Leadership Focus - Accomplishment Action

- Specifically describe what you did
- Briefly explain the process
- Use your own examples

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output



# CL3.6: Instructional Leadership Focus - Accomplishment Action

Format samples:

- We conducted a needs assessment, developed a full-day training, and provided follow-up coaching support to each teacher.
- I led three pilot teachers through a coaching cycle in which they implemented the strategies, then provided a two-part training for all teachers.
- I met with the teacher to share my concerns, get his take on the challenges he was experiencing, and develop a plan of action.
- We gathered input from all staff and developed a transparent process for drafting and revising the new matrix.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.7: Instructional Leadership Focus - Accomplishment Impact

- Be as specific as you can
- Most compelling: before/after data
- Use assessments, changes in teacher practice, survey responses, etc.
- Include numbers if you can

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output

# CL3.7: Instructional Leadership Focus - Accomplishment Impact

Format samples:

- As a result, the number of ELL students meeting standard in ELA increased by 23% from 2018 to 2019.
- I was pleased to see that teachers immediately incorporated the strategies they learned into their practice, with 54% reporting that they used the new strategies daily.
- By the end of our six-week improvement cycle, his lesson planning and classroom management showed a marked improvement, with students commenting on how much more enjoyable they found the class.
- Our updated matrix ensures that each decision gets input from the relevant stakeholders, and in a follow-up survey, 83% of staff reported that they have a voice in decisions that affect them.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.8: Instructional Leadership Focus - Relevance

- Directly explain how this accomplishment indicates your readiness for the new role
- Explicitly state that it's relevant

Job Details

Intro

Body1

**Body2**

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL3.8: Instructional Leadership Focus - Relevance

- This experience has prepared me well for the Principal role at Badger Hill Elementary, where I look forward to having an even greater impact as an instructional leader.
- These experiences have reinforced for me the importance of strong instructional leadership, which I am committed to exemplifying as I move into a new role.
- I am excited to bring this experience, and the instructional leadership skills I've developed along the way, into a new role.
- This experience is indicative of the kind of impact I will have as an instructional leader at Badger Hill Elementary.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

# Body2 Example 1

*As a seasoned instructional leader, I believe teacher professional growth is the most direct path to improved results for students. I am committed to partnering with district and state partners to identify improvement priorities for each campus. I recently worked with a teacher who was struggling with lesson planning and classroom management. I met with the teacher to share my concerns, get his take on the challenges he was experiencing, and develop a plan of action. By the end of our six-week improvement cycle, his lesson planning and classroom management showed a marked improvement, with students commenting on how much more enjoyable they found the class. These experiences have reinforced for me the importance of strong instructional leadership, which I am committed to exemplifying as I move into a new role.*



## Body2 Example 2

*As a teacher leader, I believe the best way to improve student learning is to focus on teacher practice. I am committed to working with the administrative team to craft an agenda for improvement and provide the resources and opportunities teachers need to take their practice to the next level. One project that I'm particularly proud of is our decision matrix, which ensures that all staff have a voice in school decisions that affect them. We gathered input from all staff and developed a transparent process for drafting and revising the new matrix. Our updated matrix ensures that each decision gets input from the relevant stakeholders, and in a follow-up survey, 83% of staff reported that they have a voice in decisions that affect them. This experience has prepared me well for the Principal role at Badger Hill Elementary, where I look forward to having an even greater impact as an instructional leader.*

## Body2 Example 3

*As an emerging instructional leader, I believe that improving teaching and learning is my most important responsibility. I am committed to working with the school board to help improve teacher practice, at both the individual and department levels. For example, I recently partnered with our district ELL department to provide SLOP training to all teachers and instructional assistants. We conducted a needs assessment, developed a full-day training, and provided follow-up coaching support to each teacher. As a result, the number of ELL students meeting standard in ELA increased by 23% from 2018 to 2019. This experience has prepared me well for the Principal role at Badger Hill Elementary, where I look forward to having an even greater impact as an instructional leader.*



# 3<sup>rd</sup> Body Paragraph

Organizational/Community Focus



## CL4: Organizational/Community Focus – General Goals

- Show your awareness of the relevant stakeholder groups
- Show your commitment to partnering with them on behalf of students

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

**Body3**

Conclusion

Output

# CL4.1: Organizational/Community Focus - Partnership Commitment

Express a believe in or commitment to  
parternships

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

**Body3**

Conclusion

Output

# CL4.1: Organizational/Community Focus - Partnership Commitment

- I am committed to
- I am deeply committed to
- Throughout my career, I have exemplified a commitment to
- Throughout my career as an instructional leader, I have exemplified a commitment to
- I believe in the power of bringing stakeholders together, and am committed to
- One of my core values is
- I believe that one of the most important ways we can create better outcomes for students is by

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output



## CL4.2: Organizational/Community Focus - Involvement

- Characterize your approach to partnership
- Convey related values
- Cue up the specific accomplishment you're about to share

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

**Body3**

Conclusion

Output

# CL4.2: Organizational/Community Focus - Involvement

- involving families and the broader community in our shared mission of meeting students' needs.
- ensuring that families have a seat at the table, so we can make the best decisions on behalf of students together.
- creating school-community partnerships that bring resources, ideas, and energy to our shared mission of serving students.
- securing grant funds to supplement the resources available within our community, so we can better meet students' needs.
- taking a strategic approach to grants and community partnerships, ensuring not just that funds are obtained, but that our goals and values are aligned.
- partnering with state and regional agencies to provide resources and services to better meet our students' needs.
- partnering with families on behalf of their children's education.
- bringing school, district, and community resources together to solve problems and create opportunities for our students.
- partnering with local businesses and community organizations to enhance the educational experience for our students.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL4.3: Organizational/Community Focus - Accomplishment Preamble

Cue the reader that you're about to share a  
specific example of the commitment you just  
articulated

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

**Body3**

Conclusion

Output

## CL4.3: Organizational/Community Focus - Accomplishment Preamble

- For example, I recently
- One way I have lived out this commitment is
- I recently had the opportunity to
- One noteworthy partnership that has benefitted our students is
- I have strived to increase parent involvement by
- In my current position, for example, I
- One such partnership is

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL4.4: Organizational/Community Focus - Accomplishment Example

- Share a specific example
- Convey your role in the partnership—not as important that you were the sole driver

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

**Body3**

Conclusion

Output

# CL4.4: Organizational/Community Focus - Accomplishment Example

Format samples:

- writing and receiving a \$40,000 grant to establish a family resource center in partnership with our local United Way chapter.
- adding parents to our school leadership team, where they can share a valuable outside perspective and serve as liaisons for other parents.
- worked with our regional service center to provide a two-day PBIS training for staff from schools across the region.
- developing an internship program with area businesses, giving our 11th and 12th graders valuable work experience within the school day.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output



## CL4.5: Organizational/Community Focus - Accomplishment Impact

- Describe the impact of your joint efforts
- Include numbers when possible—survey results, usage, funds, scores, etc.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

**Body3**

Conclusion

Output

# CL4.5: Organizational/Community Focus - Accomplishment Impact

Format samples:

- It has been gratifying to see the impact this program has had on our students, with 68% of students reporting increased interest in working in their chosen field after graduation.
- Parents have used the resource center to secure housing, food assistance, and other basic needs for their families.
- Teachers reported a much deeper understanding of PBIS as a result of the training, and office referrals have decreased by 28%.
- Parent reps have helped us make decisions based on firsthand knowledge of student needs, and have helped enlist the support of other parents.

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

Body3

Conclusion

Output

## CL4.6: Organizational/Community Focus - Relevance

State how this accomplishment indicates how  
you'll approach the role you're seeking

Job Details

Intro

Body1

Body2

**Body3**

Conclusion

Output

## CL4.6: Organizational/Community Focus - Relevance

- As a candidate for the Principal role at Badger Hill Elementary, I see tremendous opportunities to apply this experience and passion for developing partnerships.
- I look forward to continuing to develop such partnership on behalf of students.
- While building relationships and engaging stakeholders is time-consuming, long-term work, it pays unparalleled dividends for students, and I am committed to taking the same approach at Badger Hill Elementary.
- I will bring the same commitment and enthusiasm for forging partnerships to my work at Badger Hill Elementary.

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## Body3 Example 1

*Throughout my career as an instructional leader, I have exemplified a commitment to partnering with families on behalf of their children's education. One noteworthy partnership that has benefitted our students is developing an internship program with area businesses, giving our 11th and 12th graders valuable work experience within the school day. It has been gratifying to see the impact this program has had on our students, with 68% of students reporting increased interest in working in their chosen field after graduation. I will bring the same commitment and enthusiasm for forging partnerships to my work at Wayside High School.*

## Body3 Example 2

*I believe in the power of bringing stakeholders together, and am committed to ensuring that families have a seat at the table, so we can make the best decisions on behalf of students together. In my current position, for example, I writing and receiving a \$40,000 grant to establish a family resource center in partnership with our local United Way chapter. Parents have used the resource center to secure housing, food assistance, and other basic needs for their families. As a candidate for the Principal role at Badger Hill Elementary, I see tremendous opportunities to apply this experience and passion for developing partnerships.*



## Body3 Example 3

*Throughout my career as an instructional leader, I have exemplified a commitment to bringing school, district, and community resources together to solve problems and create opportunities for our students. I recently worked with our regional service center to provide a two-day PBIS training for staff from schools across the region. Teachers reported a much deeper understanding of PBIS as a result of the training, and office referrals have decreased by 28%. I look forward to continuing to develop such partnership on behalf of students.*



# Conclusion Paragraph

Your closing argument

# CL5: Conclusion

## General Goals

- Express a commitment to a core belief about students
- Recap your closing argument that you are the right fit for the job
- Ask for the interview
- Thank the reader

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# CL5: Conclusion

## Common Mistakes

- Expressing hesitation
- Expressing overconfidence
- Failing to ask for the interview

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## CL5.1: Conclusion - Student Belief Preamble

Re-anchor your argument in a belief  
about students

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# CL5.1: Conclusion - Student Belief Preamble

- I believe every student deserves
- I am committed to ensuring that every student receives the opportunity
- I have dedicated my career to ensuring that each student gets
- I am committed to ensuring that every student has a chance
- I see it as my responsibility to provide every student with the tools and supports they need

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## CL5.2: Conclusion - Students Deserve

State a specific, non-controversial benefit that students deserve and that aligns with the evidence that you've presented about your leadership.

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# CL5.2: Conclusion - Students Deserve

- to be known and cared for by teachers and staff who work together to create a welcoming, supportive environment.
- to experience school as a safe, inviting place where they can discover their talents, interests, and identity.
- to experience a rigorous curriculum that will prepare them for college, careers, and citizenship.
- to learn in a school dedicated to continuous improvement, from teachers dedicated to perfecting their craft.
- to explore and develop their interests and talents.
- to learn in a safe, supportive environment that fosters relationships that will last a lifetime.
- to receive the supports they need to learn at high levels, no matter what challenges they face.
- to learn from caring teachers who are dedicated to building relationships and creating memorable learning experiences.
- to develop a love of learning and gain the skills they will need for success in life.

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## CL5.3: Conclusion - Summary Claim

- Directly claim that you are highly qualified
- Avoid claiming that you are the very best, but come close

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# CL5.3: Conclusion - Summary Claim

- I believe I have the skills and experience it will take to bring Badger Hill Elementary to new heights of excellence.
- I am confident that I possess the experience, leadership qualities, and skills it will take to succeed as Principal at Badger Hill Elementary.
- While there are no doubt many qualified candidates for this role, I believe my unique combination of leadership qualities and experience make me an excellent fit for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary.
- My entire professional career has served to prepare me for this role, and I am ready to make a lasting contribution to learning at Badger Hill Elementary.
- I am ready bring my experience and passion for leadership to Badger Hill Elementary and hit the ground running from day one.
- I believe my skills and experience make me the ideal candidate for this role.
- I believe my background and leadership qualities make me the perfect fit for this position.

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## CL5.4: Conclusion - Résumé & References

Refer the reader to your résumé and recommendation letters for further corroborating evidence in support of your claim.

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## CL5.4: Conclusion - Résumé & References

- As you review my résumé and letters of recommendation, I trust you will find ample evidence of my readiness to succeed in this role.
- As you review the enclosed résumé and recommendation letters, I trust you will discern a portrait of a leader who is prepared to succeed.
- As you review the enclosed résumé and recommendation letters, you will see further examples of the work I've done over the past 17 years.
- As my résumé and letters of recommendation will demonstrate, I have the skills it will take to be highly successful in this role.

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## CL5.5: Conclusion - Ask for the Interview

- Express optimism that you will be invited for an interview
- Avoid presumptuousness

Job Details

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## CL5.5: Conclusion - Ask for the Interview

- I would appreciate the opportunity to interview for this position, and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.
- I hope to have the opportunity to interview for this position and give the hiring committee further perspective on who I am as a leader and how I might be of service.
- I look forward to the possibility of an interview.
- I look forward to having a chance to speak with you further about the position in an interview.

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## CL5.6: Conclusion - Final Thanks

Thank the reader, and sign off.

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# CL5.6: Conclusion - Final Thanks

- Thank you for your consideration.
- Thank you for taking the time to consider my application.
- Thank you for your time and consideration.

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**Conclusion**

Output

# CL5.7 Signature

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Baeder". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and "B".

Justin Baeder, PhD

# Conclusion Example 1

*I have dedicated my career to ensuring that each student gets to develop a love of learning and gain the skills they will need for success in life. I am ready bring my experience and passion for leadership to Badger Hill Elementary and hit the ground running from day one. As you review the enclosed résumé and recommendation letters, I trust you will discern a portrait of a leader who is prepared to succeed. I look forward to having a chance to speak with you further about the position in an interview. Thank you for your consideration.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Baeder", written in a cursive style.

Justin Baeder



## Conclusion Example 2

*I have dedicated my career to ensuring that each student gets to be known and cared for by teachers and staff who work together to create a welcoming, supportive environment. I believe I have the skills and experience it will take to bring Badger Hill Elementary to new heights of excellence. As my résumé and letters of recommendation will demonstrate, I have the skills it will take to be highly successful in this role. I would appreciate the opportunity to interview for this position, and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your consideration.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Baeder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Justin" and last name "Baeder" clearly distinguishable.

Justin Baeder

## Conclusion Example 3

*I am committed to ensuring that every student receives the opportunity to experience a rigorous curriculum that will prepare them for college, careers, and citizenship. I believe my skills and experience make me the ideal candidate for this role. As you review the enclosed résumé and recommendation letters, you will see further examples of the work I've done over the past 17 years. I look forward to having a chance to speak with you further about the position in an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration.*

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Baeder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Justin" and last name "Baeder" clearly distinguishable.

*Justin Baeder*

# What About Other Paragraph Topics?

- Student Focus
- Instructional Leadership Focus
- Organizational/Community
- Culture/Climate
- Turnaround/Transformation
- District Vision
- Data/Accountability
- Grants/Title/Compliance
- Specific operations issues
- Department-specific issues (central office)



# The Output

Exporting Your Cover Letter



# Output Tab

- Select cells
- Copy
- Use your favorite word processor / template
- Paste as unformatted text
- Revise

Hiring Committee	
Wayside School District	
123 HQ Ave	
Wayside, IN 12345	
	March 12, 2021
Dear Hiring Committee,	
My name is Justin Baeder, and it is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for the Principal position at Badger Hill Elementary. For the past 2 years, I have served as an assistant principal, and I am prepared to make educational excellence the norm for all students. I believe my professional experience has prepared me to be precisely the kind of instructional leader you are looking for.	
Working from the conviction that schools should be welcoming, caring environments, I am committed to ensuring that each student is known by name. I recently created a protocol to provide translation and interpretation services for families speaking other languages. As a result, our on-time graduation rate increased from 91% to 94% year-over-year. This experience has amply prepared me for success as Principal at Badger Hill Elementary. I believe that when leaders, teachers, and parents partner on behalf of student success, nothing is impossible.	
As an emerging instructional leader, I believe the best way to improve student learning is to focus on teacher practice. I am committed to working with the school board to help improve teacher practice, at both the individual and department levels. One project that I'm particularly proud of is our decision matrix, which ensures that all staff have a voice in school decisions that affect them. I met with the teacher to share my concerns, get his take on the challenges he was experiencing, and develop a plan of action. Our updated matrix ensures that each decision gets input from the relevant stakeholders, and in a follow-up survey, 83% of staff reported that they have a voice in decisions that affect them. This experience is indicative of the kind of impact I will have as an instructional leader at Badger Hill Elementary.	
Throughout my career, I have exemplified a commitment to ensuring that families have a seat at the table, so we can make the best decisions on behalf of students together. I have strived to increase parent involvement by developing an internship program with area businesses, giving our 11th and 12th graders valuable work experience within the school day. Teachers reported a much deeper understanding of PBIS as a result of the training, and office referrals have decreased by 28%. As a candidate for the Principal role at Badger Hill Elementary, I see tremendous opportunities to apply this experience and passion for developing partnerships.	
I see it as my responsibility to provide every student with the tools and supports they need to learn in a safe, supportive environment that fosters relationships that will last a lifetime. I believe my skills and experience make me the ideal candidate for this role. As you review the enclosed résumé and recommendation letters, you will see further examples of the work I've done over the past 17 years. I hope to have the opportunity to interview for this position and give the hiring committee further perspective on who I am as a leader and how I might be of service. Thank you for your time and consideration.	
Sincerely,	
Justin Baeder	

Job Details

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Output

# Working With What You Have

- Start from scratch with the spreadsheet, or...
- Work the output into your existing cover letter
- Add more evidence if you can
- Edit down to one page



# What Should I Cut?

- The more you cut, other than evidence, the stronger your letter becomes
- When in doubt, cut the more general language, and keep the more specific
- Shift the emphasis to evidence



# Revision

How to know when you're done



# Revise, Revise, Revise

- Your first draft is likely a liability
- Your 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> drafts are likely on par with other candidates'
- Competitive advantage: 4<sup>th</sup> draft & beyond

# Revising for Each Role

- Do your research on the organization
- Know the demographics
- Be aware of district-specific acronyms & terminology
- Speak to the demands of the job you want, not the job you have





# More Interviews

Getting your cover letter to do its job

# The 20% Rule

- Some people get the first job; most do not
- A good success rate is 20% at each stage
- Apply for enough jobs to get 1-2 offers

25 applications : 5 interviews : 1 offer



# Making Time

- Time is the biggest constraint
- Save all of your application responses in your Google Doc
- Use the spreadsheet to update your letter for each new job

Thank You!

[justin@principalcenter.com](mailto:justin@principalcenter.com)