



Teaching Students to Fish:

A Curricular Approach to Professional Development

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TODAY'S GOALS

- Tell the story of one course
 - Describe arguments that seemed to work
 - Highlight interesting synergies
- Give the language and tool of NARRATIVE
 - Explain it as “doctrine”
 - Show how it works in practice
 - Prove that PD skills can be taught and graded

The Evolution of the Course

- Started as PD series in 2012
- Became one-credit “intensive short course”
- Attached to CPT work authorization
- Joined Experiential Learning Committee
- Now in contract to build out mandatory course
- Potential money maker for open university audience

Arguments for PD Curricula

- NEED is obvious, well-documented
 - Ask students, employers
 - Employment stats
 - Competency models
 - Every article ever written
- Efficiency/Financial
 - No food/incentive costs
 - Can mandate what works
 - Economies of scale
 - Student satisfaction, long-term financial incentive

Arguments for PD Curricula

- Everybody is doing it
 - NALP PD group!
 - Can find a school doing it
 - If not, propose to lead the market
- Business School Comparison
 - Tons of PD coursework
 - These are our students' future clients
 - Must keep up!

Dead Horse to Water



Stages of Self-Directed Learning

Defined as:

“A process by which individuals take the initiative, with or without the assistance of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying the human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing learning strategies, and evaluating the learning outcomes.”

- Gerald Grow, applied to PD by Neil Hamilton

Stages of Self-Directed Learning



Why This Matters

	Student	Teacher	Examples
Stage 1	Dependent	Authority, Coach	Coaching with immediate feedback. Drill. Informational lecture. Overcoming deficiencies and resistance.
Stage 2	Interested	Motivator, guide	Inspiring lecture plus guided discussion. Goal-setting and learning strategies.
Stage 3	Involved	Facilitator	Discussion facilitated by teacher who participates as equal. Seminar. Group projects.
Stage 4	Self-directed	Consultant, delegator	Internship, dissertation, individual work or self-directed study-group.

Professional Narrative as “Doctrine”

DOCTRINE

- “a framework, a set of rules or procedural steps . . . through which judgments can be made”
- “a process that can be outlined and applied”
- . . . application of the process can be measured

PROFESSIONAL NARRATIVE

- **DEFINITION**

VERB:

- A skill, referring to the art of self-advocacy, can be taught and graded like any other form of persuasion, including legal writing
- Putting the facts of your experience in the light most favorable to you from the perspective of your audience (employers, business connections, etc.)

NOUN:

- The story/picture we create for employers or stakeholders through job search documents, in-person interactions, electronic communications, and beyond

Central Nugget of Narrative

What story or picture are you creating for the employer/business connection with that decision???

A Strong Overarching Narrative

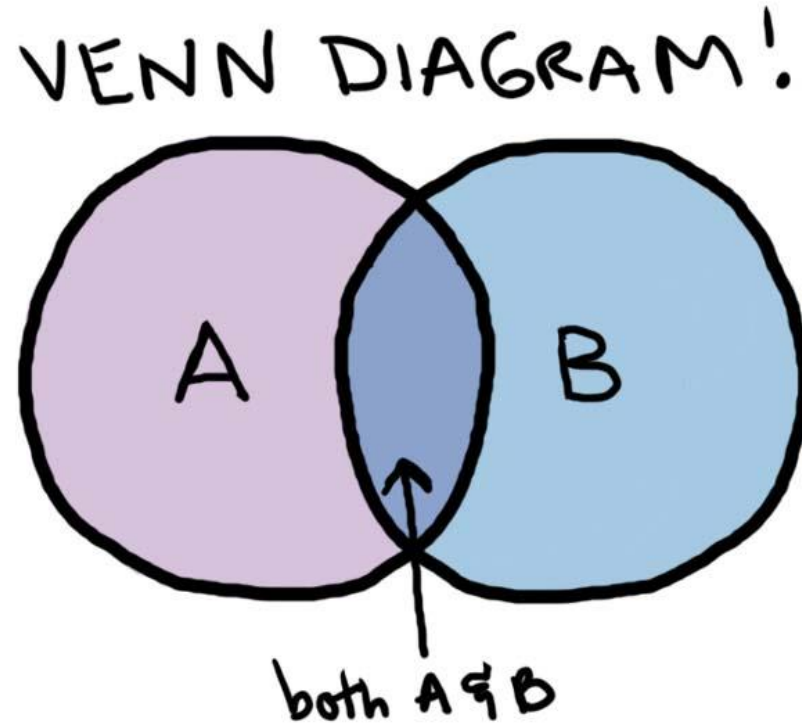
What's the best insurance for getting a job?



GEICO

Genuine Enthusiasm from an Informed Candidate, OMG it's that simple

VENN DIAGRAM



The emphasis is always on alignment

Themes as Main Tool in Narrative

THEMES:

Concepts a candidate selects that are supported by facts and, when taken together, create the most positive and complete story for the employer/audience

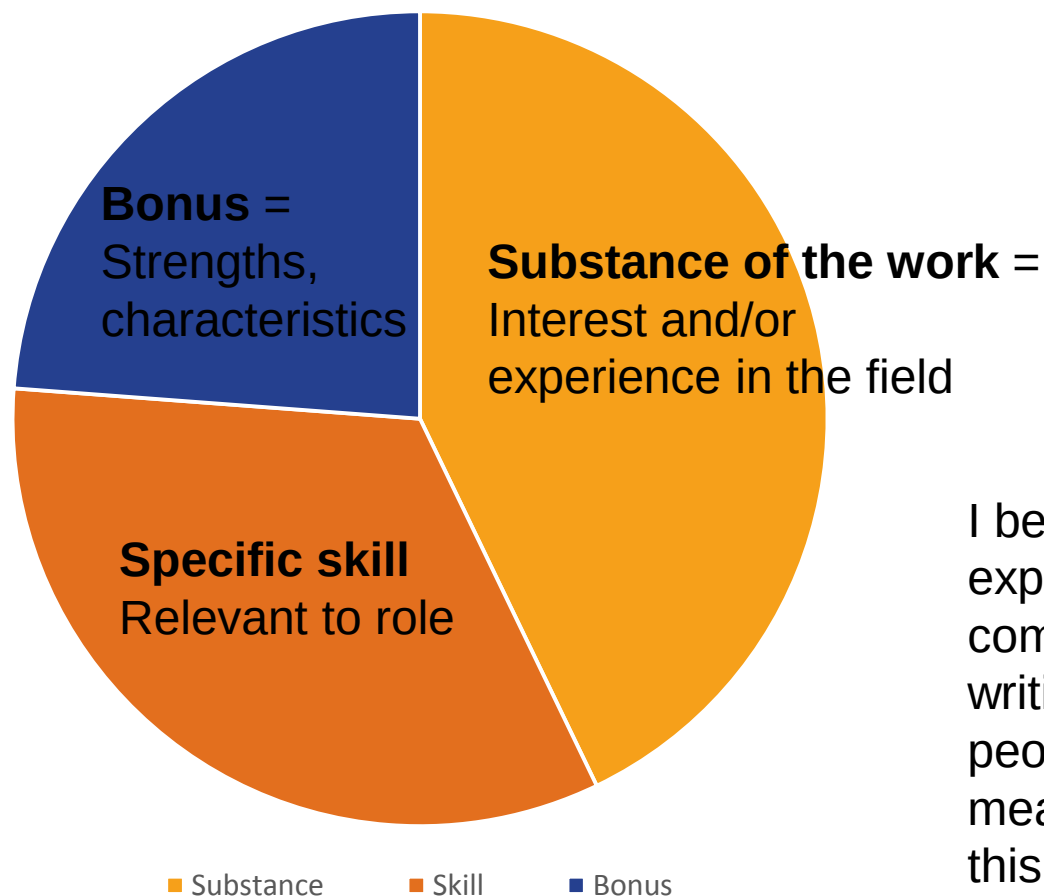
Themes continued . . .

- Supported by facts!!!!
 - A *single* experience, like moot court, is not a theme!
- Contextual and audience driven
 - There is no good “general” resume under this theory
- Creates a positive picture
 - Requires understanding of audience needs/wants, alignment of Venn diagram, and avoidance of negative inferences
- Creates a complete picture
 - Avoids repetition, includes human characteristics
 - See formula

Theme Categories

- Interest
- Experience (direct or indirect)
- Relevant skills
- Bonus characteristics
- Passion
- Strengths, interests, values alignment
- Geographic preference

Formula for a “Complete” Narrative



I believe my interest and experience in litigation, combined with my research and writing skills and ability with people, will allow me to add meaningful value to your team this summer.

Course Capsules

- Self-Assessment & Lawyer Competencies
 - Methods for Identifying (1) Professional Strengths, Interests, Values, and (2) Employer Priorities
- Selecting and Implementing Themes in Resumes
- Selecting and Implementing Themes in Cover Letters
- Selecting and Implementing Themes in Interviews
- Selecting and Implementing Themes in Business Communications

Course Logistics

- Class Time
 - Lecture, in-class activities, “case studies,” peer review, and practice looking at documents from employer’s perspective
- Homework and Quizzes
 - Knowledge, practice implementing doctrine, self-evaluation
- Final Assignments
 - Each student must select ONE (1) employer type/setting, (2) practice area, and (3) geographic area for final resumes/CLs
- Pass/Fail
 - Must attend all sessions, complete all assignments, and earn at least 65% on all graded assignments to pass

Résumé Grading Rubric

		1	2	3	4	5
I. Function/ Theme/ Narrative	Apparent					
	Appropriate					
II. Content	Order/Structure					
	Detail/Description					
	Value Proposition/Additional Information					
III. Form	Appearance					
TOTAL						

Cover Letter Grading Rubric

		1	2	3	4	5
I. Intro Paragraph	Strong Introduction					
	Roadmap/Thesis					
II. Body Paragraph	Content					
	Structure					
	Tone					
III. Closing Paragraph	Materials & Contact Info					
	Conveys Appreciation					
	Interview/Next Action					
IV. Form	Format & Appearance					
V. Bonus	(+1, +2, or +3)					
TOTAL	/ 45					

Grading

- It is subjective and that's okay
 - Same tools as legal writing to judge effectiveness: thesis statement, selected content, order/structure, support/detail, overall appeal
- Focus is selecting/implementing themes for specific employers
 - Are you doing everything you can in this document to convey yourself as an informed and enthusiastic candidate for THIS employer?
- The theme categories/formula are just a starting point, give a standard against which to judge and discuss
 - Actual percentages are not as relevant because the course is pass/fail and the goal is to have the conversation about the narrative

Final Takeaways

- Self-advocacy is difficult, but it is also a necessary skill that can be taught like all other forms of persuasion (legal writing, trial techniques)
 - We hire advocates for a reason! It's not a "soft skill."
- Narrative provides a common, credible language with which to discuss student materials/candidacy
 - Are you doing everything you can in this document to convey yourself as an informed and enthusiastic candidate?
- This is a very specific moment in time for law schools, we should take advantage!

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PROFESSIONAL NARRATIVE IN PRACTICE

Syllabus | Spring 2017

Professor: Sarah Carlson, Sarah.d.carlson@emory.edu

I. Description

This one-credit course is designed to provide students with a theoretical framework with which to approach their job searches and professional development. Students in the class will learn how to use professional narrative in their job searches and how to put the facts of their experience in the most favorable light for prospective and current employers. Specifically, in this course, we will study narrative and themes for attracting employers, identify techniques to engage, and learn how to create unique, persuasive narratives in résumés and cover letters. In addition, students will learn how to use narrative in interviews and in building and maintaining professional relationships.

Each student will also assess their summer 2017 internship and will submit a personal assessment and evaluation at the close of their internship, which will address the intersection of his/her internship and market area of interest, and the ways in which the internship integrates into his/her professional narrative.

II. Goals and Objectives

- Self-awareness and the ability to communicate a strong professional narrative
- Ability to read and interpret employer materials, including postings, to identify employer priorities
- Writing skills for strong, tailored narratives in job search documents, including résumés and cover letters
- Ability to use narrative in interviews and business-oriented conversations
- Relationship building skills
- Practical training and implementation through a required summer internship
- Self-ownership over, and confidence in, the ability to direct one's career

III. Course Texts:

There will be readings assigned for each class session. Readings will pull from the following:

- Emory Law Career Strategy Guide
- Course Packet (includes sample résumés, cover letters, and class activities)
- Roadmap, The Law Student's Guide to Preparing and Implementing a Successful Plan for Meaningful Employment, Neil W. Hamilton
- Additional short readings

*****All assigned readings will be available on Canvas. Most will be available in Course Reserves, the Career Strategy Guide is available in Course Files.**

IV. Course Details

All class sessions will be held on Fridays from 2:30 – 5:30 pm in Room 5F (from March 17 – April 7), and ALL CLASS SESSIONS ARE MANDATORY.

Credits, Prerequisites, and Grading Criteria

This course will be 1 credit hour. Each student will earn a satisfactory or unsatisfactory designation at the close of their summer internship, after they finish the final course assignment, which is related to their summer internship and described below.

Students must do the following to earn a satisfactory (passing) grade in the course:

1. ATTENDANCE: Students must attend and participate in all class sessions
 - For details on emergencies and excused absences, see below, Section V, Absences.
 - To encourage and facilitate the ability to speak intelligently about career goals, during class students will participate in an activity called Career Questions. During this portion of class, students will each be asked a random Career Question and must present an answer to the class for one to two minutes. There is no grade for Career Questions, but students will receive constructive feedback and every student must participate.
2. QUIZZES AND ASSIGNMENTS: Students must complete all in-class quizzes and assignments. Although there is no letter grade assigned for the course (it is pass/fail), students will receive letter-grade feedback on their in-class quizzes, their final résumé, and cover letter assignments.
 - IN-CLASS QUIZZES: All students must complete all quizzes and earn an average of at least 65% on the quizzes averaged together.
 - RESUME AND COVER LETTER ASSIGNMENTS: All students must choose one employer type of choice and complete (1) the final résumé assignment and (2) the final cover letter assignment, tailored toward the employer type chosen, AND earn an average of at least 65% on these two assignments averaged together.
 - Instructions for the résumé and cover letter assignments will be available in Canvas
3. INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT: Students must perform one informational interview with a professional in the selected field of choice and write a short report detailing the experience by the close of their summer internship.
 - Instructions for the informational interview assignment will be available on Canvas

4. FINAL PERSONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION: Complete the final personal assessment and evaluation after the close of the summer internship.

- Instructions will be available on Canvas

V. Absences

All absences must be approved by the professor in advance. To make up for an approved absence, students must:

- Do the assigned reading, listen to the recording of the class session, complete the quiz for that class session, and earn a 65% or greater on the quiz (quizzes and class recordings will be available in Canvas).
- Have their tailored resume and cover letter and their LinkedIn profile reviewed by an attorney in the chosen field. Students will then provide the name and contact information of the attorney, along with a ½-1 page reflection on the feedback they received from the attorney to the professor (including any changes they made to the materials).
AND
- Do a mock interview with the Career Center and write a short reflection with the three most important pieces of feedback gained from the experience.

Students must do all of the above, and attach in a single email to the professor and her TA, Raymond Tran (Raymond.l.tran@emory.edu): (1) the completed quiz, (2) the ½-1 page reflection regarding the attorney feedback on their materials (including the attorney's name and contact information), and (3) their reflection on their mock interview.

VI. Office Hours

The instructor will be available for office hours in the Career Center on Wednesdays from 9:30 am – 10:30 am through Wednesday, April 12th.

VII. CLASS SESSIONS

SESSION 1: Introduction to Narrative, Professional Strengths, and Cultural Competencies

Session Objectives:

Students will gain an understanding of:

1. Class purpose, expectations, and rules, including how class assignments and grading will work
2. CPT (curricular practical training) and how it works at Emory (guest, Laura Yearout)
3. The concept and skill of building a strong professional narrative
4. The concept of self-directed learning, professional strengths, and how to identify professional strengths, interests, and values
5. The concept and skill of cultural dexterity

We will talk about:

1. The reading, “Now, Develop Your Strengths” excerpts
2. The reading, “How to Adapt to Cultural Changes In Foreign Countries”
3. Selecting an employer type and geographic area of preference for class assignments

There will also be a quiz and we will do Career Questions.

SESSION 2: Narrative & Résumés as Foundational Documents

Session Objectives:

Students will gain an understanding of:

1. Professional competencies that legal employers want in candidates and employees
2. How to identify competencies specific employers are seeking and how to choose persuasive themes to highlight for employers
3. Why the resume is a foundational document and how it can and should be tailored for specific employers
4. How to highlight specific themes and tailor résumés for specific employer types

We will talk about:

1. The reading, Emory Law Career Strategy Guide, Chapter 3, Job Search Correspondence, Résumés portion (available in Course Files)
2. The reading, “Finding Your Legal Niche” (available in course reserves)
3. Shultz and Zedeck Lawyering Effectiveness Factors (available in course documents)
4. The assignment for Session 3, which requires students to find and read two resources to inform themselves about their practice areas/industries of choice (can be articles, book chapters, anything).

We will also have a quiz, do Career Questions, and students will review each other’s resumes for apparent themes and overall appearance.

SESSION 3: Theme Selection & Cover Letters

Session Objectives:

During this session, students will gain an understanding of:

1. Themes and how themes can be selected and used to attract employers in any industry
2. How to select themes for a strong roadmap sentence to guide their cover letters
3. How to use the cover letter formula to draft a strong, persuasive cover letter

We will discuss:

1. The reading, Emory Law Career Strategy Guide, Chapter 3, Job Search Correspondence, Cover Letter portion (available in Course Files)
2. Common Sense in Letter Writing article (available in Course Reserves)

3. The resources students selected for their practice areas of choice

SESSION 4: Using Narrative in Interviews and in Building Professional Relationships

Session Objectives:

During this session, students will gain an understanding of:

1. The purpose and theory behind interviews
2. How to select themes in preparation of interviews, and how to use positive narratives to answer difficult interview questions
3. The value of professional relationships and how to use narrative in building and maintaining a professional network
4. How to apply narrative theory to basic job search logistics

We will discuss:

1. The reading, Career Strategy Guide, Chapters 4 and 5, Interviewing, Networking and Informational Interviews (available in Course Files)
2. Final course logistics, including the Informational Interview Assignment and how the Personal Assessment and Evaluation will work at the close of the summer

We will also have a quiz, peer review final cover letter assignments, and do Career Questions.

Descriptions of the stages of Self-Directed Learning as applied to professional development by Neil Hamilton in *A Professional Formation/Professionalism Challenge, Many Students Need Help with Self-Directed Learning Concerning their Professional Development*, 27 REGENT UNIV. LAW REV. 225 (2015).

Table 1: Stages of Self-Directed Learning³³

	Student Characteristics
Dependent Stage	- Assumes passive role with respect to professional self-development - Lacks interest in developing competencies except minimum required by external authority - Does not generally want or seek feedback into strengths and weaknesses - May react negatively to such feedback - Depends on external authority for explicit direction and validation
Interested Stage	- Can see self-interest in professional self-development - May recognize weaknesses, but motivation to improve is principally externalized - Responds reasonably to questions and feedback on strengths and weaknesses - Is willing to engage mentors/coaches in goal-setting and implementation strategies - Shows some initiative and persistence to learn competencies
Involved Stage	- Is committed to professional self-development - Identifies strengths and weaknesses in development of competencies - Responds positively to and reflects on feedback concerning strengths and weaknesses and how to improve - Seeks insight from mentors and coaches in goal-setting and implementation - Is internalizing motivation to learn new knowledge and skills continuously - Is internalizing standard of excellence at all competencies

³³ Adapted from Gerald O. Grow, *Teaching Learners to Be Self-Directed*, 41 ADULT EDUC. Q. 125, 129 (1991).

Table 1: Continued on next page

	- Shows substantial persistence in learning competencies
Self-Directed	- Is intrinsically motivated to professional self-development and learning new knowledge and skills over a career - Actively identifies both strengths and weaknesses in development and sets goals and creates and executes implementation plans - Proactively develops mentor and coach relationships and proactively seeks help and feedback from mentors and coaches - Reflects on feedback and responds to feedback appropriately - Knows when and how to seek help - Actively seeks challenges - Has internalized standard of excellence at all competencies



Stage	Student	Teacher	Examples
Stage 1	Dependent	Authority Coach	Coaching with immediate feedback. Drill. Informational lecture. Overcoming deficiencies and resistance
Stage 2	Interested	Motivator, Guide	Inspiring lecture plus guided discussion. Goal-setting and learning strategies.
Stage 3	Involved	Facilitator	Discussion facilitated by teacher who participates as equal. Seminar. Group projects
Stage 4	Self-Directed	Consultant, Delegator	Internship, dissertation, individual work or self-directed study-group.

The Staged Self-Directed Learning Model,
G. Grow

Taken from Gerald O. Grow, *Teaching Learners to Be Self-Directed*, 41 ADULT EDUCATION QUARTERLY 125 (1991).

The reason this matters for law students is that most self-identify as dependent or interested, but we as career centers are set up to assist self-directed students. We are designed to be consultants, and every encounter they have with us is completely voluntary. This is why for-credit courses are so important. Every student should be at least involved in their own professional development, or it is very difficult for advisors to make much progress.

Résumé Grading Rubric

Sarah D. Carlson, Emory University School of Law, Draft

		1	2	3	4	5
I. Function/ Theme/ Narrative	Apparent					
	Appropriate					
II. Content	Order/Structure					
	Detail/Description					
	Value Proposition/Additional Information					
III. Form	Appearance					
TOTAL	/ 30					

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK:

Résumé Grading Rubric (annotated)

Sarah D. Carlson, Emory University School of Law, Draft

I. Function/Theme Narrative

- A. Apparent
 - a. At least three themes are clearly present, including a geographic preference, and are reflected by effective use of keywords, selected coursework, activities, bar association memberships, etc.
- B. Appropriate
 - a. The themes selected are appropriate for the chosen audience and reflect adequate research
 - For example, research and writing or other litigation skills may not be the strongest themes to illustrate for a transactional law position

II. Content

- A. Order/Structure
 - a. Lists the strongest, most relevant experiences, words, and activities first where possible (i.e. those that support the selected themes)
 - For example, a 2L shouldn't list his membership in the Immigration Law Society before his membership in the Corporate and Business Law Society if the employer selected is a transactional law employer and transactional law is a selected theme
 - b. Headings are used appropriately to reflect selected themes where appropriate
 - c. Work descriptions are listed in reverse chronological order
- B. Detail/Description
 - a. Provides more detail and substance for experiences/portions that are directly on point for the employer chosen and gives less detail for experiences/portions that are not directly relevant
 - For example, if the selected employer is an immigration non-profit, more detail should be provided around the student's previous immigration non-profit experience and less detail should be given to an experience in personal injury
 - b. Each work description starts with an action verb and provides sufficient detail, including a representative sampling of the type of projects, issues, work product, etc., especially for the most relevant experience that reflects selected themes
- C. Value Proposition/Additional Information
 - a. Significant, relevant entries are illustrated with sufficient detail
 - For example, significant scholarships, rare awards, or otherwise non-obvious significant activities are explained if relevant and helpful
 - b. An additional information section is used appropriately, including interesting and specific skills, hobbies, languages, along with bar association memberships, bar plans, and other entries that show ties to the geographic area if possible

III. Form

- A. Appearance
 - a. At a glance, the résumé looks polished and professional with sufficient spacing and proper centering
 - b. There are no grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors

Cover Letter Grading Rubric

Sarah D. Carlson, Emory University School of Law, Draft

		1	2	3	4	5
I. Intro Paragraph	Strong Introduction					
	Roadmap/Thesis					
II. Body Paragraph	Content					
	Structure					
	Tone					
III. Closing Paragraph	Materials & Contact Info					
	Conveys Appreciation					
	Interview/Next Action					
IV. Form	Format & Appearance					
V. Bonus	(+1, +2, or +3)					
TOTAL	/ 45					

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK:

Cover Letter Grading Rubric

Sarah D. Carlson, Emory University School of Law, Draft

I. Intro Paragraph

- A. Strong Introduction
 - a. Identifies the specific position for which the applicant is applying
 - b. Discusses why the candidate is interested in the position, employer, and/or geographic market, including any personal ties to the employer (bonus points for personal connection)!
- B. Roadmap/Thesis Sentence
 - a. Apparent: The letter conveys two to three main themes using a roadmap/thesis sentence.
 - b. Appropriate: The themes selected are appropriate, will be attractive to the intended audience based on the field of choice, and reflect adequate research. The themes selected in the roadmap are focused on why the person is a strong candidate for the specified position/employer/market.

II. Body Paragraph

- A. Content
 - a. The body paragraph uses specific, compelling examples to support each of the themes selected with sufficient detail, providing more detail to support more important themes.
 - b. Ties the themes (interest, experience, skills, education) back to the value the candidate can add to the employer.
- B. Structure
 - a. The body paragraph supports the themes of the roadmap sentence in the same order as the roadmap sentence, listing and supporting the most persuasive themes/arguments first.
- C. Tone
 - a. Conveys the tone of an informed and enthusiastic candidate, with natural language that flows smoothly, avoids recreating the resume. Clear and concise.

III. Closing Paragraph

- A. Materials and Contact Information
 - a. Refers to the resume and/or enclosed application materials, provides a contact method.
- B. Conveys Appreciation
 - a. Includes well written statement of appreciation.
- C. Interview or Next Action
 - a. Requests an interview and/or mentions when the applicant will follow up
 - b. Bonus [no points deducted if not included]: for an out of town applicant, mentions a time when the applicant will be in town

IV. Form

- A. Format and Appearance
 - a. The letter follows proper block or modified block format with a date and addresses at the top, signature at the bottom.
 - b. There are no grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors. The letter looks polished and the author paid attention to detail.

V. Bonus

- A. Added Value - plus one point for each or any of the following, no points deducted if not included:
 - a. Personal Connection -- Mentions personal connection to employer (check introduction paragraph)
 - b. Visit to the Area -- Mentions time applicant will be in town (check closing paragraph)
 - c. Personal Touch -- Any personal touch conveying enthusiasm that goes beyond the expected