



Correspondence

COVER LETTERS

The cover letter or letter of application that accompanies your resume is an original, one-page statement that introduces you by highlighting your interest, education and experience as they apply to a particular employer. Where your resume is a broad, more encompassing statement of your background, education and experience, your letter of application should tell the recipient why he or she has received your resume. Employers will use your cover letter to make observations about your written communication skills, organizational skills, technical knowledge, personality and motivation. The personalized cover letter and printed resume should form a package designed to get you to the next stage, the job interview.

BASIC COVER LETTER GUIDELINES:

- While all of the letters you send during your job search may be quite similar, each one should be tailored to the position and organization to which it is sent.
- Print your letters on the same paper you use for your resume, and use the same font for both documents. Keep a copy of each letter you send out, whether on a disk or on a paper, for reference.
- Use the correct name and title of the person who is responsible for reviewing resumes. You can also get information about the organization by looking at their web pages, by asking a receptionist at the organization for the appropriate contact name, or by contacting their Human Resources office directly to request information.
- Always refer to the employer as Dr., Mr. or Ms., but never as Mrs. or Miss.
- Open your letter with a strong sentence that defines the purpose of the letter.
- All letters of application should follow the standard business letter format.
- Proofread and spell-check the letter carefully for any errors. This will be seen as a sample of your writing and communication skills, as well as your ability to pay attention to detail.
- Strive to keep your letter of application interesting, concise and to the point.
- Do not forget to express your strong enthusiasm for the position and outline your top skills.

Date
Your Street Address City, State, Zip Code
Individual's Name Title Company Street Address City, State, Zip Code
Dear Mr., Ms., or Dr. Employer:
Opening: Indicate why you are writing, the position or type of work for which you are applying, and how you learned of the opening. If a current employee or contact suggested that you contact this person, include his or her name.
Body (this can be one or two paragraphs): Expand on the information in your resume. If you are a recent graduate, or will be graduating soon, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. List examples of skills you developed some other way that would be useful in the position. Emphasize your skills or abilities as they relate to the position for which you are applying.
Closing Paragraph: Refer the reader to your enclosed resume, stating that it is a summary of your qualifications. Make a specific request for an interview. Your closing statement should be positive, requesting specific action from the reader. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.
Sincerely/Thank you, etc.,
(4 spaces for Signature)
Type your name
Enclosure(s)

THANK YOU LETTERS

After an interview, write a brief follow-up letter. Less than one percent of people interviewed take the time to send such a note, so you can be certain it will be noticed. Use the letter to reemphasize your potential value to the company/institution, correct misunderstandings, and add forgotten points. Do not forget to reiterate that you are still interested in the position and the organization. Strive to send the letter within 48 hours after your interview.

Handwritten notes are acceptable. In fact, they are often received more positively. Choose the handwritten style if you are confident enough that your handwriting will be understood. Finally, when sending a handwritten thank you, select professional notecards.



Date

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Individual's Name
Title
Company
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr., Ms., or Dr. Employer:

Remind the interviewer of the position for which you interviewed, as well as the date and place of the interview.

Confirm your interest in the opening and in the organization. Highlight your qualifications and direct them toward the various points that the interviewer considered important to the job. If you have done anything since the interview that demonstrates your interest in the position, such as tasks with alumni, faculty or other people, or research in the library, be sure to mention it.

Include any information not previously presented to supplement your resume, application, letter and interview. You may have completed a term paper or a research project, or received some kind of recognition. If travel, relocation or a similar subject was stressed during the interview, be sure to confirm your willingness to comply with these conditions.

If appropriate, close with a suggestion for further action, such as a desire to have additional interviews at a mutually agreeable place and time.

Sincerely/Thank you/etc.,

(4 spaces for Signature)

Type your name

General Outline for a Cover Letter

Date of Letter

Applicant's Name

Applicant's Address

Applicant's Phone Number

Employer's Name (Letter should be addressed to a particular person, if possible)

Employer's Title

Company

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Mr., Ms., Dr., _____:

Opening Paragraph: State purpose of the letter, name the position or type of work for which you are applying, and mention how you heard of the opening or organization.

Middle Paragraph(s): Explain why you are interested in working for this employer and specify reasons you desire this type of work. Point out relevant education and experiences, but do not reiterate your entire resume. Highlight those accomplishments and skills which are most pertinent to the employer and do so in a confident manner. Make the addressee want to read your resume by being personable and enthusiastic.

Closing Paragraph: Pave the way for an interview by indicating the action or steps you will take to initiate an interview date. Thank the reader for taking the time to review your resume.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Name Typed

Enclosure (to indicate that a resume is enclosed)

Cover Letter – Sample 1

September 3, 2007

1217 NW 24th Avenue, #112
Portland, OR 97203
(503) 293-3200

Ms. Elizabeth Cooper
Assistant Director
Multnomah County Personnel Division
1234 Oak Street
Portland, OR 97207

Dear Ms. Cooper:

I am writing this letter on the suggestion of Mr. David Jones, Director of Multnomah County Mental Health. In a recent conversation, he gave me a thorough overview of the department's operations and mentioned that you had an opening for a Mental Health Associate. Given my enthusiasm about the opportunity, he strongly encouraged me to apply.

I am currently a senior at Lewis & Clark College, majoring in Psychology. Through my courses and volunteer work, I have gained a working knowledge of mental health, social issues, and the role of community agencies. Presently, I am volunteering at the Women's Crisis Line. There I am able to work within an agency, providing clients with referrals to social service organizations throughout the Portland Metropolitan area while gaining insight into the role of local agencies. Also, during my sophomore year at Lewis & Clark, I helped initiate a student volunteer program to place tutors and mentors with local learning disabled students. In working on this project, I not only learned a great deal about the local school districts, but I succeeded in managing and motivating a group of almost 20 volunteers.

I would like the opportunity to meet with you and discuss the position and the contributions I could make to Multnomah County Mental Health. I will be contacting you next week in the hopes of arranging an interview. If you would like to contact me before then, I can be reached at the above number. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

Anna S. Furman

Enclosure

Sample Request Letter

June 10, 2007

Lewis & Clark College
0615 SW Palatine Hill Road
MSC 612
Portland, OR 97219
(503) 768-8881

Ms. Alexandra Schumacher
Account Executive
Forrester Advertising Associated
1001 Union Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Dear Ms. Schumacher:

I am in the process of finding out more about a career in advertising and came across your name in the Alumni Network (LC Net), maintained by Lewis & Clark College's Alumni Relations Office. I would be interested in the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your experiences in the advertising field.

I am presently in my sophomore year, majoring in Communication. Though I have no direct experience in advertising, I have worked for the last two years on the Pioneer Log, including selling space to advertisers. This summer I will be gaining further experience as a public relations intern with the Phoenix Memorial Hospital. One of the reasons I am writing to you specifically is that I am from Phoenix and hope to return there after graduation. Therefore, I am especially interested in finding out about advertising in the Phoenix area.

I will be returning to Phoenix for the summer next week and will contact you at the end of the week to see if we can arrange a convenient time for an informational interview. I look forward to the opportunity to talk with you.

Sincerely,

Signature

Emily Cooper