



HOW TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER

A cover letter is a business style letter that accompanies each resume you send to prospective employers. It serves as an introduction, telling the employer who you are and why you are sending a resume. Your letter allows you to provide a more detailed account of skills and experiences in your background that relate directly to the position you are seeking. Your cover letter may make the difference between obtaining a job interview and having your resume ignored, so it makes sense to devote the necessary time and effort to writing an effective letter.

Be Sure To:

- Address your letter to a specific individual within the organization.
- Research the organization so you can make a case for your interest.
- Target your letter to match each position being sought.
- Emphasize ways you can meet the organization's needs.
- Support your claims with evidence.
- Communicate interest, motivation, and confidence.
- Ask for an interview.
- Keep it to one page.
- Pay attention to grammar and spelling.

Paragraph 1 - Introduction

Tell the reader why you are writing and name the position you are pursuing. You may state where you saw the position opening. If you have a networking contact at this company, you should refer to that person in the first paragraph. Remember, the first paragraph of a cover letter should spark the interest of the reader.

Paragraph 2 – Interest and Experience

Explain why you are interested in the position and employer. Explain why this company is a good fit for you by relating your knowledge, skills and abilities to their organization, mission, goals, etc. Refer to your resume, but do not summarize it. Focus on two or three key skills that correspond with what the position requires. Remember that this should be structured more like a narrative - your resume is where you simply list experiences and accomplishments.

Paragraph 3 - Closing

Thank the receiver for reviewing your resume and considering you for the position. Indicate that you would appreciate an opportunity to discuss the position in further detail later.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER #1 (job application)

Alexandra Reed
226 South Pine Street
Drums, PA 18222
215-555-1212
atreed5@gmail.com

March 6, 20XX

Fred Jones, Manager
Executive Recruitment
XYZ Systems Development Corporation
200 Race Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am writing to apply for the Systems Analyst position that I saw posted on your company's website. This position interests me because it affords the opportunity to combine my programming skills with the knowledge of information technology gained through coursework.

As the enclosed resume indicates, I will receive a degree in business administration from Any University in May. My major concentration is in management information systems. My coursework has provided me with a foundation in Enterprise Resource Planning Systems and an understanding of the role of workflow management. Through summer work experience at Siemens Medical, I have gained a solid background in various applications, languages, and operating systems including Microsoft 2003 server, Windows scripting, SAP, Java, and XML. I am confident that my coursework, combined with my previous work experience, would allow me to make a strong contribution to XYZ Systems Development Corporation.

I would appreciate having an opportunity to meet with you personally to discuss my qualifications and your professional needs in detail. I can be reached at 215-555-1212 or by email at atreed5@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Reed

Alexandra Reed

SAMPLE COVER LETTER #2 (email internship application)

Subject line of email message: Lab Tech Internship—Luke Santone

Dear Mr. Saunders:

I am writing in reference to the Lab Tech Internship position listed recently on Neumann University's online job board. This position appeals to me because of my strong interest in a pharmaceutical laboratory, as well as the opportunity it presents to use the knowledge I've gained through my science classes in college.

I am currently a junior at Neumann University in Aston, PA working on my Bachelor of Science degree in biology. As a biology student, I am often required to work independently on my own laboratory projects requiring me to be accurate, consistent and self-motivated. In addition, I am able to successfully maintain a good grade point average while working part-time to earn money for my college tuition and remaining involved as a campus leader. These skills, combined with my educational background in biology, make me an ideal candidate for this internship position.

Attached please find a current copy of my resume. Thank you for considering me for this position. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Luke Santone

Luke Santone
10 South Street
Philadelphia, PA 19111
215.222.5555
lj_santone@neumann.edu