



IDCE Career Development

COVER LETTER

What Is A Cover Letter?

A cover letter is a one-page persuasive document aligns your skills with the requirements of the position and contribution to the organization. The reader should understand why you are enthusiastic about the position, and what knowledge, skills, and personality traits you would bring. It is also an example of your writing abilities. Proper grammar, formatting and proofreading are critical.

Do I Need Both A Cover Letter And A Resume?

Yes. A cover letter accompanies your resume when you submit an application for a position. There are different schools of thought and not all employers review both the cover letter and the resume however, your application is not complete without a cover letter.

The cover letter tells a story: who you are, your experience, and what contributions you may make to the organization.

You will need to write a targeted cover letter for each position you apply for. Effective cover letters are tailored to individual organizations and job descriptions.

The Basics

A cover letter is professional correspondence. A properly formatted cover letter shows employers that you understand and can follow standard business conventions appropriately.

Use clear, direct language. Avoid exclamation points, ambiguous terms (ex. “various”, “different”) hyperbole, or abbreviations that may not be generally understood. Eliminate typographical errors. Remember that spell check software does not always catch grammar mistakes.

Electronic Submission

Most employers prefer the .pdf format for resumes and cover letters. A .pdf ensures that your document will appear the way you formatted it no matter what software the employer uses. Label the document with your full name and position title to make it easier for the employer to identify it in a sea of applications.

Double check your letter after you convert it from Word to .pdf. Occasionally there are glitches in the conversion, so make sure that the finished product is error free!

Paper submission

If you are mailing or hand-delivering your cover letter, be sure to use paper that matches your resume and envelope. You can purchase high-quality paper for your resume and cover letter, and envelopes, at any office supply store.

COVER LETTER SAMPLE

Samuel Sample

123 Downing Street, Apt 2
Worcester, MA 01610

January 27, 2017

Specific Name (Mr. John Doe)

Specific Title (Director, Human Resources)

Company/Organization

Street Address

City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr. or Ms. _____: (or, “Dear Members of the Search Committee”, ***never*** use “*To Whom it May Concern*”; “*Sir or Madam*”)

Opening Paragraph: Clarify the purpose of your letter. Convey that you have a **specific, informed** interest in **this particular** employer. It should be personal and detailed, rather than generic and overbroad. If you know someone at the organization and have talked to them about their work, this is the place to indicate that.

Second Paragraph: Write about your qualifications as they pertain to the job requirements. Do not directly repeat information from your resumé. Focus on the **skills** you have developed from the experiences listed on your resume. Provide 2-3 specific examples of your success in related roles. Cite the work experience, educational preparation, activities and skills that qualify you for the position and would contribute to the goals, or mission, of the organization.

Third Paragraph: Indicate why you should be considered as a candidate, focusing upon how your skills can fulfill the needs of the organization. Mention specific results or achievements. You should directly tie your experiences to the qualifications described in the posting. This is the key paragraph(s) that differentiates you from the next candidate. *Do not mention how you think the company can assist you in meeting your own career goals.* They **want to know what you can do for them**, not what they can do for you.

Closing Paragraph – a call to action: Identify the next step you will take, ideally to set up an interview. Thank the addressee for his or her time and consideration, and convey your eagerness for an interview. You may wish to mention that you will call within a specified time in the hope of arranging a meeting

Sincerely,

(3 blank lines for your handwritten signature)

Samuel Sample

FINAL DRAFT

January 27, 2017

Samuel Sample

123 Downing Street, Apt 2
Worcester, MA 01610

Specific Name (Mr. John Smith)
Specific Title (Director, Human Resources)
Company/Organization
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr. Smith:

Please accept my application for the US Climate Policy Project Coordinator position, as posted on Ecojobs.com. This position interests me a great deal and I believe my experience in international environmental law and policy and strong project management skills provides the unique qualifications to contribute to xxxxx(organization)'s project concerning....

As Project Manager with biotechnology and waste management companies, I oversaw budgets exceeding \$\$ and monitored projects related to *insert example*. At xyz and abc, I conducted internal compliance and validation audits, managed manufacturing permits and wrote Standard Operating Procedures for complex, technical drug manufacturing processes. This required....and was successful due to.....Additionally, working closely with regional waste management providers, I assisted in meeting state recycling and renewable energy regulations by providing/recommending.....

Through my combined graduate studies and professional experience in environmental policy, I worked extensively with culturally and politically diverse teams and am familiar with methods of climate change mitigation and adaptation. I can successfully integrate practices and principles to established fields of economics and agriculture. For example, I conducted research in China and Australia, and served to the US Mission at Geneva as a delegate to UNEP, UNCTAD and FAO, where I contributed in meetings concerning international organic standards, (*this would be a great place for an example*)

Thank you for reviewing my qualifications. I look forward to the opportunity to interview for this exciting opportunity. Please contact me at.....or email.....

Sincerely,

Sue Sample

“T-Model” COVER LETTER

January 27, 2017

Samuel Sample
123 Downing Street, Apt 2
Worcester, MA 01610

Specific Name (Ms. Susan Barrett)
Specific Title (Director, Marketing)
Company/Organization
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Ms. Barrett,

It is with great interest in the Project Manager position, I submit my application. I was initially informed of this position through a John Doe and was immediately interested. With my professional connections on-campus, an understanding of graduate students' interests and the ability to learn new networking systems, I believe I possess the qualities you seek in a candidate.

Your Requirements:

- Excellent writing, interviewing, and proofreading skills
- Knowledge of technology and new media
- Photography and video experience
- Time management and organizational skills. Ability to meet deadlines is critical.

My Qualifications:

- Compiled billing notes, interviewed interns and potential employees at previous jobs and aided colleagues in paper compositions.
- Efficient with computers and up-to-date media networks
- Experience with Microsoft Office
- Administrative support experience, where organizational skills is crucial
- Volunteer Coordination for time sensitive events

The Project Manager position is an exciting opportunity to contribute knowledge in marketing and to impart important programming information to our graduate students.

Thank you for reviewing my qualifications. I look forward to the opportunity to speak with you about this position and how I may contribute to the success of the Development Department.

Sincerely,

Samuel Sample