

# COVER LETTERS

JOSEPH MEYERHOFF CENTER FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

## THE BASIC FORMAT

\*Use heading from your resume  
to include your contact information\*

Date

Contact Person (Mr., Mrs., or Ms.)

Title

Company Name

Address

City, State, Zip

(Country if applicable)

The cover letter works together with your resume to introduce 'you' to potential employers. Maintain a consistent look with your resume and cover letter by repeating the heading layout from your resume. Your name and contact information should be exactly the same. The letter should be written in business format and no longer than 1 page, and should serve as the starting point for a phone conversation or in-person interview.

**Dear (Mr., Mrs., or Ms.),** Whenever possible, the cover letter should be directed to a specific person. This improves the chances of your materials being reviewed by the proper person or committee. Research on the organization's website or call to determine this information. Avoid using "To Whom it May Concern," and use Hiring Manager or Selection Committee instead.

**OPENING PARAGRAPH- The Introduction:** Introduce yourself and identify why you are contacting them. If you are a student, include your department, year in school and MICA's name. In this first introduction, you want to write Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), and then use the shortened version for the rest of the letter. Explain where you found out about the opportunity (on MICAnetwork, the organization's website, job search website, magazine, etc.), and if you have been referred to this contact by another individual, identify him or her in this paragraph.

**SECOND PARAGRAPH - What You Know About Them:** This may seem silly, but the employer will be impressed that you have done your homework about them. Research the company using their website and take notes of projects or ideals that you are impressed with. Mention a few examples of and share why you see yourself fitting in at their company. Of all of the jobs out there, why do you want to work for them?

**THIRD PARAGRAPH - Your Contribution:** Highlight the relevant parts of your resume that most qualify you for the position. Site specific experiences and skills that demonstrate what you will be bringing to the employer. Why are you the best person for the job? What unique strengths do you have and how can they be utilized? Share what you will learn from the experience, and how this would be a great next step in your career. Remember, this is not the time to restate your entire resume, just connect yourself in a meaningful way to the organization with what you can bring.

**FINAL PARAGRAPH - The Connection:** Close your letter by thanking the prospective employer for their time and consideration. Use the employer's name again and reiterate your enthusiasm for working for them. Indicate what will happen next, stating you will follow up on the receipt of your materials and explore whether an interview can be arranged at that time. Let them know the best way to get in touch with you. Include your website if you would like to direct them to your online portfolio. If your search is long distance, indicate when you will visit the area. If you plan to relocate or if you are best reached at certain days/times, this is the place to say so. Remember, do whatever you say you are going to do here, mark it on your calendar and follow up!

Sincerely,

*Your Signature*  
Your name (typed)

# COVER LETTERS

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## **SENDING MATERIALS VIA EMAIL**

Most cover letters and resumes are submitted electronically either through an online application or as attachments to an email. If sending your materials through an online application process, **always make sure to follow the instructions** to upload your materials provided by the employer, including file type, size, etc.

## **BODY TEXT OF THE EMAIL**

The email should be written as formally as your cover letter, but is not a direct copy of the content from your cover letter. The content of the email itself should be brief, and simply expresses interest in the position, and states that a cover letter and resume (and work samples if applicable) are attached to the email for consideration. You may also want to include a one to two sentence “hook,” if you have very relevant work experience, or were referred to this position by a contact within the company/organization, etc.

## **FILE TYPES FOR MATERIALS**

When instructions are not provided, save your files as PDFs rather than Word documents. This retains and secures your intended text formatting when viewed from different computers and operating systems.

# JOHN MICA

123 Main Street, Any City, Any State 12345 • 410-555-5555 • jmica@mica.edu • www.johnmica.com

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## BASIC COVER LETTER

### RESPONDING TO A POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

March 15, 2011

Brenda Smith  
Human Resources  
The Phillips Collection  
1600 21st Street NW  
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Ms. Smith:

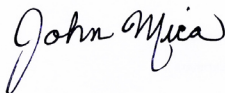
I am writing in response to The Phillips Collection's advertisement for a Curatorial Intern, as listed on The Phillips Collection's website. I am currently a junior at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) majoring in Painting and with a concentration in Graphic Design. As you will see on my enclosed resume, I have a wide range of experience with exhibitions and research.

I was equally drawn to the words "Curatorial Intern," and "Phillips Collection," since I am a devoted fan of the Phillips. Recently, I viewed the exhibition "David Smith Invents" at the Phillips, and was inspired not only by the work itself, but also by the dynamic layout of the exhibition. I love the intimate setting, yet vast range of European and American pieces that the Phillips Collection has to offer, and this institution will be particularly inspiring place for me to intern, since my long-term career goal is to work in the Exhibitions Department of a museum.

As a Research Intern at the Maryland Historical Society, I am currently researching the history of the Eastern Shore railroad lines, and using my findings and photo documentation to help create a proposal for a restoration project. I am also currently working in the MICA Exhibitions Department, where I transport artwork, and assist in the installation and deinstallation of 2-D and sculptural works. Through this experience, I have been trained in art handling, gallery lighting, and how to organize and install a cohesive gallery space. These two different pursuits have also developed my ability to manage multiple tasks effectively and enthusiastically. I am eager to apply my skills and values to a curatorial internship at a prestigious organization like the Phillips Collection.

I welcome the opportunity to learn more about this position, and to discuss my qualifications at greater length during an interview. I will follow up with an email within a week regarding the status of my application. I look forward to speaking with you soon, and thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



John Mica

**LETTER OF INQUIRY**  
A SAMPLE LETTER OF INQUIRY TO A MICA ALUMNA

Jane Mica  
124 Park Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21217  
410-222-1111  
j.mica@email.com

April 22, 2010

Tina Dayglo  
Director, Graphic Design  
GoGo Public Relations  
2020 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, MD 21217

Dear Ms. Dayglo:

I am writing to inquire about summer internship opportunities with GoGo Public Relations. I located your name in the "Alumni Today" publication in the Joseph Meyerhoff Center for Career Development at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). I am currently a Junior Graphic Design major at MICA.

It was exciting to find an alumna of MICA using graphic design skills in a public relations context. My focus in graphic design at MICA has been in web and interactive design. I have also concentrated my professional energies in the area of public relations, during a summer 2009 internship in MICA's Development Office. As an intern, I was responsible for adapting MICA's web design models for the Development Office, where I worked closely with both the Development and Design staff throughout my internship.

My specialized training in web design and my experience in a public relations context have provided me with the tools I need to make a real contribution to GoGo Public Relations. I hope that you may be able to advise me on the best approach to making a start in this field.

Thank you for your time and attention. I will follow up with a phone call within the next week to discuss with you any potential internship opportunities at GoGo Public Relations.

Sincerely yours,



Jane Mica

## THE EXTRA MILE (RESEARCH) LETTER

SAMPLE ONE

Lucy McMightee  
123 Maryland Institute Boulevard  
Baltimore, MD 21217  
444-444-4444  
lucy@gmail.com

April 22, 2010

Arnold Sellalot  
Sellalot Fine Arts  
15 West 23rd Street  
New York, NY 10001

Dear Mr. Sellalot:

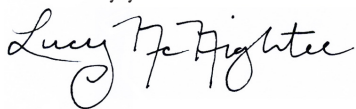
I am writing to inquire about job opportunities with your gallery. My professor at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), Lisa Painter, suggested that I contact you regarding a Registrar position among your staff. I will be graduating from MICA in May with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting, and a minor in Liberal Arts.

When Lisa told me of a possible position with your gallery, I was thrilled. I have visited Sellalot Fine Arts frequently, during trips to New York, and have followed your artists' work with great interest. During my studies at MICA, I have gained experience in registrarial work as a work-study student in MICA's Media Resource Center (MRC). After working in the MRC for two years, I have learned in-depth knowledge of archival image systems, as well as a real enthusiasm for slide and video organization and research. Another important specialized experience has been my work at Open Space Baltimore, an artist-supported and operated gallery. In this capacity, I worked within a volunteer staff of eight to organize shows, sell artwork, promote exhibitions, write press materials, and maintain the administrative office.

I have put the skills and knowledge I accumulated in the MRC to immediate use in my work at Open Space. I hope to have an opportunity to put the sum of these skills and experience to work for Sellalot Fine Arts, and believe I would make a unique contribution to your gallery.

I will be contacting your assistant in the next week to inquire about setting up an appointment to meet you. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lucy McMightee". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large, stylized 'L' and 'M'.

Lucy McMightee

## THE EXTRA MILE (RESEARCH) LETTER

SAMPLE TWO

Susie Applicant  
1224 Lanvale Street  
Baltimore, MD 21217  
susie.applicant@gmail.com  
410-555-5555

August 4, 2010

Human Resources  
Maryland Institute College of Art  
1300 Mount Royal Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21217

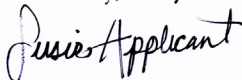
Dear Human Resources Manager,

I am responding to your posting for the position of Administrative Assistant/Technology & Resource Coordinator at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) that appeared in the Baltimore Sun. My resume is attached for your review and consideration.

In my current position, I am responsible a number of tasks, including typing, editing, database management, and a large amount of verbal and written communication with various individuals. Along with my administrative knowledge, I am an English major with an emphasis in Publishing and a minor in Information Systems. I have excellent writing, proofreading, and computer skills, and am a very dedicated worker who is willing to learn in addition to being one who enjoys learning new things whenever the opportunity arises. I focus on getting the job done efficiently and properly, especially in a company with a cause that motivates me, such as MICA. I feel that this position would afford me that, and would feel privileged to work for an institution like MICA. I have a strong love of art, and although I've never had the kind of creativity or natural talent to be an artist, I have always wanted to be in an artistic environment, and would also find it very satisfying to assist students who are seeking this type of career, as it is quite admirable.

I welcome an opportunity to meet with you for an interview. With the skills I have developed as an administrative assistant and an English major, I believe I would be an excellent match for this position. Attached is my resume, which details my background and experience. I appreciate your consideration and look forward to discussing this career opportunity in detail at your convenience. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susie Applicant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susie Applicant