The Cover Letter Guide

Your cover letter, just like your resume is a reflection of you. This is your personal marketing material as well as a writing sample. Just like companies have brochures to entice you to buy their products, your cover letter is a brochure advertising YOU! Cover letters should be concise, professional, and convey an air of enthusiasm; representing your true self as you will be in an interview and subsequently in the job you are hoping for!

The cover letter should look professional:

- On the same paper you will use for your resume
- Neat and centered, in standard business format
- Addressed to a particular person whenever possible
- No spelling, grammatical or typing errors!
- Be no more than one page using the same font as the resume and size of 11 to 12

A simple way to devise a cover letter is to break it down into paragraphs:

The FIRST PARAGRAPH should explain why you are writing to THEM:

- State the position for which you are applying
- Refer to the person who suggested this company or contact
- Answer the question "Why do I want to work for this specific interest employer?"
- Answer the question "Why do I want this specific job or internship?"

The SECOND PARAGRAPH should sell YOUR interests, skills, education and experience:

- Highlight your skills, education and experience as related to the employer’s needs
- Summarize your resume. Do not reiterate specifics.
- Address all of the qualifications in the job posting
- Expand on a particularly relevant point in the resume

The THIRD PARAGRAPH should provide a closing statement:

- Request an interview to further discuss qualifications
- Clearly state when and where you can be reached (include phone # and email)
- Suggest you will call for an appointment - to show you are actively involved in your job search
- Thank the employer for their time and consideration
Cover Letter Samples:

Applying for a job

678 Asylum Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117

February 21, 2015

Mr. U. R. Stylish
Manager, Organizational Development
High Fashion Stores, Inc.
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Dear Mr. Stylish:

I received your name from the Career Development Center at Saint Joseph College where I am completing a Bachelor’s degree in English. Valerie Wilson encouraged me to write to you about being considered for your Executive Development program beginning in June. My unique combination of skills along with my career interest in fashion make me an ideal fit with the program.

I believe my qualifications are a great match with those outlined in the job description. My campus leadership experience along with the customer service skills I gained as a fashion sales associate will allow me to make an immediate contribution to your team. Written and oral communication skills are among my strongest assets, with a major in English and a concentration in communications. Additionally, I have taken two courses in business (accounting and marketing management) as electives and expect to graduate in the top 15 percent of my class.

As a student athlete, I have gained exceptional time management and organizational skills as I balanced my academic focus with my commitment to two varsity sports. This experience also allowed me to develop relationships with individuals of diverse backgrounds and to center my efforts on team goals.

I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and will call your office next Tuesday to set up a specific appointment time. In the meantime, I can be reached at cell phone or email. Thank you for your consideration of my qualifications and interest.

Sincerely,

Betty Lou Graduate
Applying to an internship

12589 Jason Drive
Ithaca, New York 14850

April 3, 2016

Sharon A. Waters
Personnel Director
New York State Police Department
892 South Park
Albany, New York 11081

Dear Ms. Waters:

I enclose my resume in response to your March 31 listing in the Saint Joseph College Career Development Center for the Research and Data Analyst internship. With an interest in law enforcement and a major in Sociology, I feel the opportunity is a great chance to apply my skills and develop hands on experience.

My coursework in research and statistics and my internship in law enforcement have provided me with the skills and education to succeed in this position. I am familiar with the New York State Police operations based upon my summer job in your Albany office this past summer and based my research on apprehension rates. My success in my math and statistics courses is based on my strong quantitative skills and attention to detail.

The position you outline is one in which I feel I can apply my technical background as well as campus leadership experience. At USJ, as President of the Be the Best You Can Be Club, I was heavily involved in planning, organizing, and communicating. I believe that these qualifications along with my energy and work ethic will allow me to become a valued member of your team.

I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss with you how I might best meet your needs. I will call your office next week to inquire about an interview. In the meantime, I can be reached at cell phone or email address.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Cheryl Ayers
860.526.8889
Requesting Advice/Exploring Internship Possibility

32 Park Road
Marlborough, CT 06000

May 23, 2016

Mr. Ralph Cantor
Publisher
RiverEast News
321 Marzio Road
Glastonbury, CT 06033

Dear Mr. Cantor:

As a rising junior majoring in English at the University of Saint Joseph, I am interested in a career in journalism. Our family has long read the RiverEast to update ourselves on both local news and activities finding it informative and well written. Given my respect for your weekly paper, I wonder if you might be willing to meet with me for an informational interview and to consider the possibility of a volunteer/internship position with the RiverEast this summer.

At the University of Saint Joseph, my liberal arts education and role on the school newspaper allowed me to develop outstanding writing, editing and proofreading skills. My contributions and writing skills were recognized by the faculty advisor as I was promoted from Special Features Writer to Managing Editor after just one month. As Editor, responsibilities included assigning stories to a staff of 15 student-writers and participating in the lay out of the 30-page monthly magazine. Last summer as an intern at the Hartford Advocate, I gained experience proofreading and editing the Editorial section, learning the importance of attention to detail and the dedication needed to create a high quality magazine.

Enclosed is a resume outlining my qualifications and achievements as well as recent personal publications. I look forward to hearing from you and will contact you in a few days to follow up on my interest. In the meantime, I can be reached at cell phone or email. Thank you for your time and consideration. Gu

Sincerely,

Christina E. Stob