

Writing a Cover Letter Employers Will Want to Read

Cover letters are marketing tools used to create interest in you as a candidate for jobs and/or internships and are an important part of the application process. Each cover letter you write must be unique. The goal is to motivate the recipient to review your resume and ultimately invite you for an interview. A good letter will clearly demonstrate how you fit with the particular organization and position you are applying to.

Cover Letters That Get Employers Attention

- Well-written- without typos
- Show that the writer knows exactly what the company does and needs
- Gives the employer a sense that the applicant would become an asset to their company
- Attention to detail
- Enthusiasm and a positive attitude

Steps to Writing a Strong Cover Letter

1. *Learn about the organization.* What are its goals and mission? Pay attention to the language used to describe the organization and use similar language when talking about yourself.
2. *Review the position listing and highlight important words and phrases.* Employers will tell you exactly what they are seeking. These are your clues – use them wisely!
3. *Consider skills you have relevant to the employer’s needs.* These may be from a variety of experiences; it is up to you to “connect the dots” so the employer sees how and why you meet their needs.
4. *Write a draft that clearly spells out how and why you should be considered for the position.*
 - Describe two or three experiences, accomplishments or skills that demonstrate your fit with the position
 - Be specific and provide examples to support claims
 - Avoid the temptation to copy wording from sample cover letters and don’t repeat verbatim what is on your resume! Be sure to highlight what you have to offer, rather than what you have to gain.
 - Also avoid beginning each sentence with “I” (sometimes is ok)– it’s a sign of weak writing

Cover Letter Format

General Formatting

- Confine your letter to one page, single space
- Use 11-12 point simple font – the same font style used on resume
- Make sure to leave a space between each paragraph
- Leave a space between heading and greeting
- Align all paragraphs to the left of the page (no indentation needed)
- 1’ margins around entire document
- Leave 3 spaces between salutation and typed name
- Sign your letter in black pen between your name and salutation (if submitting hard copy)
- Address the letter to an individual, not “to whom it may concern”
 - Make a phone call if necessary to get the appropriate person’s name and title
 - If you are unable to find the name use *Hiring Manager, Human Resources Department*, etc.
- Write in a professional, confident, and polite tone, but let your personality and enthusiasm for the employer and position come through
 - Avoid negative phrases such as, “Although I never . . .” and “While I don’t . . .”
- Proofread carefully and check for grammar, spelling and typos- have someone else read it over



Address Section

Cover Letter Format

Your Local Street Address City, State and Zip Code Date
Mr./Ms. First and Last Name Title Name of Firm or Organization Street Address City, State and Zip Code
Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

First Paragraph

- Identify the purpose of this letter along with the specific position you are interested in
 - Add Job ID number if applicable
- Include where you found this job posting (i.e. HawkHire, referral, website, job fair, etc...)
- Why you, Why them?
- 3 sentences maximum

Second/Third Paragraph

- Sell your qualifications for this position
- Don't repeat verbatim from your resume
- Explain how your academic background, skills and interests, work experience, and/or activities will contribute to their success
- Refer to prior achievements in these areas
- Communicate your enthusiasm for this type of work and that employer; show why you are interested by illustrating more than superficial knowledge of the organization

Final Paragraph

- Refer the reader to the enclosed resume.
- Courteously indicate your interest in an interview
- State if you will be in the area on a certain date and would like to schedule an interview if convenient
- State if you will follow up with the employer regarding your application materials (and make sure you do it)
- Offer to provide any other needed information to support your candidacy
- Express appreciation for the employer's consideration

Cover Letter Example

500 Main Street
New Paltz, NY 12561

March 5, 2015

CVS Caremark
Attn: Mary Jones, CVS Internship- HR Recruiting
1 CVS Drive
Woonsocket, RI 02895

Dear Mary Jones:

I am writing to apply for the CVS summer 2016 internship position in the corporate function of advertising or marketing. A friend who completed the CVS internship last summer told me about the opportunity, and I then explored your internship webpage. I have completed the Online Application, and my résumé is enclosed in this Application Packet.

My academic success and campus involvement over the past two years at State University of New York at New Paltz have shaped me into an excellent CVS intern candidate. I possess strong time management and organizational skills. By working well with others while in leadership positions, my sense of adaptability developed. I have gained knowledge regarding ethical practices in advertising and marketing through extensive research and an academic focus on ethics. Leadership, responsibility, and a willingness to learn are all personality traits that I have developed as a college student.

The CVS Caremark Corporation puts a lot of time and energy into their summer internship program. Your corporation's dedication to student involvement and increasing knowledge among college students has prompted my interest in the program. I would grow as a future employee through office projects, weekly meetings, and career development sessions. This hands-on experience would benefit my course of study by allowing me to learn from and contribute to the organization. The supportive learning environment that CVS provides for their interns is the perfect entrance into this exciting field.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to meet with you to further discuss how my contributions can be beneficial to the CVS Internship program. Feel free to contact me via email at 555@hawkmail.newpaltz.edu or by phone at (888) 222-1111. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

N.P. Student

N. P. Student

Enclosure

Next Steps: Create or Update your cover letter and come see us at the Career Resource Center

Appointments: Monday-Friday from 8:30. - 5:00 p.m.

Drop-in Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. and Friday 10 a.m. - Noon

Career Resource Center

(845)- 257-3265

careers@newpaltz.edu

Humanities 105

Check our website for a schedule of upcoming *events, programs and applications*

Look for our Wednesday Workshops

Newpaltz.edu/careers

The Career Resource Center covers topics including:

Major to Career Advice

Career Assessments

Resume and Cover Letter Review

Choosing a Major

Practice Interviews

Volunteer, Internship and Job Search

Job Search Coaching



- Exclusive access to volunteer, internship and full-time postings in our online database
- Instant access to resources including
 - Event listings and registration
 - Career finder and explorer
 - Salary guides
 - Document library: Resume Samples and department specific Career Advising Handbooks
 - 500,000 national postings
- Log in through from [my.newpaltz](#) Student tab, click on [Internships and Careers](#), then [HawkHire](#)