

The Cover Letter

What is a Cover Letter?

The cover letter typically accompanies your resume when you are applying for a position. It should be specific to the position that you are applying for, and demonstrates to the employer why (based on your background) you are a great candidate for that particular position (based on the job description) and/or company. The cover letter is a business document, so should be formatted with a business heading and left aligned.

Typical Cover Letter Format

Your Address

Your Contact Information

Date

Contact Name (if available)

Contact Title

Company Name

Company Address

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. (if no contact, you can say “Human Resources Manager, or Hiring Manager”),

The first paragraph is an introduction of yourself and how you learned of the opening, as well as your interest in the position/organization. This requires you to relate yourself to the organization or to the position in order to demonstrate your interest.

The middle paragraph(s) is a profile of how your skills and experience match the qualifications sought. In order to do this, consider the following points:

Read the job description carefully to get a clear idea of what the company is looking for. This goes beyond just the “qualifications” section of a job description- make sure to discuss your ability to do the job.

Review the company website to learn what type of person the company might value.

Match your background, whether it is work experience, academics, volunteer experience, etc. and describe why you believe those experiences make you a qualified candidate for the position.

The last paragraph wraps up the cover letter. You should reiterate your interest in the position, and desire to hear from them regarding the opportunity. You also want to thank the reader for their time in considering your application, and provide information for how you can be reached. If you would like, and are able to, you can state that you will follow-up with them directly. Be positive and confident (without being arrogant).

Sincerely,

Signed Signature (if a physical copy is being sent)

Name (Typed)

Cover Letter Checklist

- ☐ Is my cover letter consistently formatted, with 1” margins and font size between 11-12pt?
- ☐ Is my cover letter on one page?
- ☐ Did I personalize the cover letter to describe my interest in the position and company?
- ☐ Did I specifically address my ability to perform the job they are hiring for?
- ☐ Did I select my most relevant experiences to present my background to meet the reader’s needs?
- ☐ Is my cover letter error free including correct grammar, spelling and punctuation?
- ☐ Did I double check that the cover letter is addressed to the correct contact, company, and that the company name is correct throughout the document?

Samples

Below you will find samples for various types of cover letters including internship, full-time, full-time with prior experience, and email cover letters.

Use the examples for inspiration but do not copy word for word! Remember- your cover letter should be specific to the job you are applying for, based on your individual background.

Sample Internship Cover Letter

Your Name
Address
Address
Phone # and email

Date

Robert Smith
Senior Account Executive
Fromm Cooley and Associates
500 Linden Oaks Drive
Rochester, NY 14625

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am contacting you in regards to an internship in the Public Relations department at Fromm Cooley and Associates. I was referred to you by Cindi Johnson from Delmont Hotel. An internship at Fromm Cooley and Associates would be an ideal way for me to expand my knowledge of the public relations field, while contributing my passion for sports and strong writing skills.

I am a senior at St. John Fisher College, majoring in Management with a concentration in Public Relations. My classes have given me an understanding of the work and importance of the public relations field. Along with the academic knowledge, I have also gained practical experience through an internship at the Sports Information Department at Fisher. I had the opportunity to write press releases on various games, matches, and players, as well as contacted the proper media outlets to update them on scores and provide highlights of games. These experiences have given me the background knowledge and ability to apply that knowledge, which will enable me to make an immediate contribution to the Public Relations Department at Fromm Cooley and Associates.

My resume is enclosed for your consideration. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you soon. Please feel free to contact me at (phone #) or by email at (email address).

Sincerely,

Name

Sample Full Time Cover Letter

Your Name
Address
Address
Phone □ email

Date

Name of Person
Company
Address
Address

Re: Community Advocate Position

Dear Ms. Name,

I am very interested in your posting for a Community Advocate, which I found through the *CareerZone* on the St. John Fisher website. My enthusiasm for community building along with my recent Bachelor of Arts in Sociology with a minor in Psychology, prompted me to forward my resume to you immediately with the hope of further discussing my qualifications for this position.

In addition to my strong academic background, I have had valuable team building and leadership experiences, both as Captain of the Fisher Soccer team and in my volunteer work as a Service Scholar. Among the projects our service group actively supports are the Habitat Housing Project in the city of Rochester and the new tutoring program in the East Rochester High School Math & Writing Center. I was part of an active group of advocates for those students whose parents could not afford regular tutor fees and later helped to co-design the curriculum.

The posting for Community Advocate states that self-motivation and leadership are key qualities in a successful candidate. I believe my background and dedication to service of those in need demonstrates my personal drive to make a difference in my community. I was also privileged to discover the richness of cultural history and diversity during my semester abroad at the University of Limerick in Ireland.

I look forward to meeting with you to further discuss how I can make a positive contribution to XYZ organization as a Community Advocate. I can be contacted through email at ___ or phone at _____. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name (typed)

Email Cover Letters

Your formal cover letters will be longer than those that are the body of an email where you attach your resume. For email, you will still introduce yourself and provide an overview of why you believe you are a qualified candidate, however, there will not be as much detail included as in a full page cover letter. Email cover letters can be beneficial for applications that request a resume to be submitted via email, but are not explicitly required.

Sample Email Cover Letter #1

Dear Ms. Name,

As a strong advocate for those with financial and educational challenges, I was very excited to see the opening for a Community Advocate at XYZ organization. The qualifications of leadership, dedication and team-building skills sought in the ideal candidate are all attributes I have developed through my classes, extensive community service, internships, and study abroad experience.

I am eager to meet with you to further discuss the attributes and passion I can bring to this position and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Name

Sample Email Cover Letter #2

Dear Human Resources,

I am attaching my resume for the positions of Editor, Business Professional position and Editor, Special Projects position with Element K, sourced through the St. John Fisher College's *CareerZone*.

My previous journalism experience and related internships have enabled me to develop the qualities you are looking for in these editorial positions. I have had several articles published in the Fisher student creative writing magazine, and editorial pieces printed in the *Democrat & Chronicle*, which I believe demonstrate my creativity and humor in addition to my writing abilities. I have also been recognized with the 'Best Human Interest Story of the Year' Award.

I believe that my experience and well-honed writing and editing skills would be a great match for either of these positions with Element K. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Name