

Cover Letters

Your resume is your marketing brochure. Your cover letter is your introduction or 'executive summary' to your resume. The main point of a cover letter is to tie your experience directly to the job description. Look at the description and be sure the words relate directly to those in your cover letter and resume. If the employer is looking for teamwork, highlight a team experience in your resume and be sure to include a team-related accomplishment in your cover letter.

A Cover Letter should be:

- **Concise:** A cover letter should be three to four paragraphs. Any longer might lose the interest of the reader. We suggest the following format (see sample on back):
 - *Opening paragraph:* Four or five sentences maximum. Mention the position you are applying to/interested in, briefly introduce yourself, and indicate where you learned of the opportunity.
 - *Body of letter:* Usually one or two paragraphs. Share detailed examples of your qualifications for the position's specific requirements. Many students choose to use one paragraph to discuss previous work experiences and another one to discuss academic experiences or leadership experience, etc. Choose whatever combination communicates your most relevant qualifications most effectively!
 - *Closing:* Three to four sentences maximum. Summarize your qualifications, restate your enthusiasm for the position, and include your preferred contact information for the employer to follow-up with you.
- **Clear:** Articulate your qualifications in words that mirror what the employer provided in the job description. Do not try to impress with a long list of accomplishments. This is the executive summary, not the resume.
- **Convincing:** An employer will make a decision on your candidacy based on the combined letter and resume package. You have to articulate the connection to the job description and sell your skills. This is a competition. Why should the employer hire you?

Cover Letter Checklist

- The words and action verbs in your cover letter should be reflective of the job description.
- Always be professional.
- Use proper grammar.
- Check for spelling and punctuation errors.
- Know to whom the resume/cover letter package is going. Do not use "To Whom It May Concern." Address letter to the Recruiter or Hiring Manager.
- Use paragraph form, not bullet points.
- Do not copy and paste content from your resume to your cover letter.
- Do not be forward in requesting an interview.
- Keep to one page (no more than 3-4 paragraphs).
- When e-mailing a recruiter or hiring manager directly, use the body of the email to write two to three sentences that introduce yourself and mention to what position you are applying. Include your cover letter and resume as attachments. Do not cut and paste your cover letter into the body of the email.

see sample on other side...



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Internship Description Sample

Identify key points in the job description to address in your cover letter.

Focus Marketing, LLC

Focus Marketing, LLC is a public relations firm committed to personalizing services to its clients. We are looking for summer interns who want to gain hands-on experience with new product launches. This is an excellent opportunity to gain exposure to the intricacies of the public relations industry.

Duties include:

- Monitoring industry and client news
- Building and maintaining media lists
- Drafting press releases and pitches
- Event support
- Writing copy for brochures, websites and advertisements
- Creating social media campaigns and maintaining social media pages
- Creating monthly newsletters

Desired Skills & Experience:

The ideal candidate is highly creative, has excellent writing and organizational skills, is highly motivated and detail oriented, and has an understanding of current social media trends (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram). Candidates should have the ability to handle multifaceted projects and have strong follow through. Previous internships are a bonus but not required.

Qualifications:

Junior or Senior level students with a PR, advertising, journalism or marketing major preferred. Must be comfortable with Social Media, Photoshop a plus but not required. Word, Outlook, Excel are essential.

Please send all materials to:

Emily Annenberg
Marketing Coordinator
Focus Marketing, LLC
1391 Tweet St.
Los Angeles, CA 90089
emily.ann@focusmarketing.com

Cover Letter Sample

It is OK to use either of these types of headers for your cover letter.

(traditional block):

Tiffany Traveler
813 Johnson Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90089

March 3, 2014

Emily Annenberg
Marketing Coordinator
Focus Marketing, LLC
1391 Tweet St.
Los Angeles, CA 90089

(match your resume):

Tiffany Traveler

813 Johnson Drive • Los Angeles, CA 90089 • (213) 740-4567 • ttravel@usc.edu

March 3, 2014

Emily Annenberg
Marketing Coordinator
Focus Marketing, LLC
1391 Tweet St.
Los Angeles, CA 90089

Dear Ms. Annenberg, (or use full name if pronoun is uncertain)

Dear Ms. Annenberg, (or use full name if pronoun is uncertain)

It was great meeting you during the University of Southern California (USC) Internship Week marketing panel on February 13. I am very interested in the Focus Marketing, LLC internship position advertised through the USC connectSC portal. I am a junior at USC majoring in Psychology and am very excited about this opportunity to combine my skills in social media and marketing to customize services for Focus Marketing, LLC's clients.

One desired strength mentioned for the Focus Marketing, LLC internship is motivation. As a leader and Marketing Chair of OUTreach, a USC community service organization, I coordinate and write articles for our weekly newsletter and maintain three social media pages, including Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. I increased our social media audience by 50% within 12 months by developing strategic partnerships across campus and customizing updates for each social media account daily. Part of my success is attributed to my passion for marketing our organization to the USC community. I am confident my high motivation level, strong social media and marketing skills make me an excellent match for this internship position.

I understand that creativity is a very important asset to successful product launches. Recently, I worked closely with four team members to propose a new product line of beverages during a marketing class. I designed a 3D product rendering, a print brochure and a social media ad using Photoshop. As part of the final project, our team presented the product line to a panel of marketing professionals. The panel ranked the project first place among eight groups nationally. Remarks from the panel included mention of my innovative designs. Using my creative skills to benefit the Focus Marketing, LLC team would be a great experience in my future career as a Public Relations professional.

I am highly motivated to contribute my creative, social media and marketing skills through the internship. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you in the near future. I can be reached at (213) 740-4567 or by email at ttravel@usc.edu.

Best regards,

Tiffany Traveler

USC Career Center

3601 Trousdale Parkway, Student Union 110, Los Angeles, CA 90089-4897

(213) 740-9111 • careers@usc.edu • http://careers.usc.edu