



# Cover Letter

## **The Cover Letter:**

Also referred to as the Letter of Application, or Employment Letter or Statement of Intent, the Cover Letter tells the employer the type of position you're seeking -- and exactly how you are qualified for that position.

Few employers seriously consider a resume that is not accompanied by a cover letter. A resume is useless to an employer if he or she doesn't know what kind of work you want to do. A cover letter tells the employer the type of position you're seeking -- and exactly how you are qualified for that position.

## Cover Letter Basics

### **Cover Letter Construction:**

The cover letter is your marketing tool to grab the employers attention by illustrating how your experience matches the company's specific needs. Begin with your contact information followed by the employer's contact information and a salutation of: Dear Mr., Mrs. Last Name or Dear Hiring Manager.

#### *Paragraph 1:*

- State the specific position title for which you are applying and how you became aware of the position
- Show your interest in the company and/or the position specifically

#### *Paragraph 2 and consecutive paragraphs:*

- Outline your qualifications, strengths, accomplishments, and the benefits you can offer the organization
- Match your experience, skills and knowledge to the position
  - Elaborate on 1 or 2 key experiences to show the employer your demonstrated capabilities
  - Identify key words/phrases in the job description and relate your skills

#### *Final Paragraph:*

- Convey your interest in the position
- State what you will do next and follow through, ask for a response, thank them for their time

### **Cover Letter Tips:**

- The cover letter should be specifically tailored to each position. Generic cover letters may communicate to an employer that you are uninterested in the position - and they know when they get the same letter everyone else got
- If sending your cover letter via email, use the body of the email to identify the position you are applying for and the documents attached. Then attach your resume, cover letter and references to the email
- If applying for positions from a job search website, you may upload a general cover letter. It is recommended to go to the organization's human resources site to apply directly with a tailored cover letter
- If the job application is online and only one document can be uploaded, copy and paste your cover letter into your resume document, separating the two with the "page break" tool
- The cover letter should be sent to a named individual; "To Whom it may Concern" is not acceptable
- The cover letter is the most important part of a direct-mail sales package and the product is you. As with any other sales letter, you are trying to motivate the audience to action
- Tell the employer what you can do for the company instead of what the company can do for you

# Sample Cover Letters

The following is an example of cover letter format. Each applicant will have different content in each of the paragraphs based on individual experience. Cover letters are no longer than a page in length.

Jane D. Student  
1234 Anywhere Street  
Your Town, Virginia 12345  
555-555-5555  
jane.student@anywhere.com

April 13, 2009

Jeremy R. Harrison  
Director of Human Resources  
Harrison & Associates, Inc.  
456 Oyster Point Way  
Newport News, Virginia 23606

Your personal information.  
Include: name, address, phone  
number and email address.

The employer's information.  
Include: employer's name, their  
title and the employer's  
address.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

This letter is in response to your position of Sales Manager which was posted on Christopher Newport University's Career Connect website. Additionally, I spoke with Bob Harrison in the accounting department who recommended the position to me based on my skills and career goals. Harrison & Associates management training program and dedication to customer satisfaction greatly appeals to me and I believe my excellent work ethic and proven success working with people make me a strong candidate for this position.

As outlined in my resume, I will be completing my Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree with a concentration in Management in May of 2009. In addition, my employment has enabled me to obtain experience in customer service and sales in a variety of different settings. I have been recognized as a highly motivated and hard working employee with the ability to learn quickly and solve problems.

I have also further developed my leadership and presentation skills through my involvement in activities at CNU. Currently, I am the President of Alpha Kappa Psi at CNU where I am responsible for delegating tasks and motivating and mentoring other group members. Recently, AKPsi co-sponsored a CNU alumni panel discussion on job search preparedness where I was heavily involved with the scheduling and planning of the event as well as and the facilitation the event itself. I believe that my experience, education and management skills will enable me to contribute within your organization.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the position along with my qualifications. I can be reached at the above phone number or email should have any questions or to schedule an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Signature Here*

Jane D. Student

Enclosure: Resume, References

If you are sending your cover letter via email:

- Use "attached" instead of enclosed
- Leave 2 spaces after sincerely, just type name
- Supply the same email address as your contact email address that you send the application from