



*Guide to  
Cover Letters  
&  
Thank You Letters*

**206 Strebel Student Center**  
(315) 792-3087 ♦ Fax (315) 792-3370

# **TIPS FOR WRITING A PERFECT COVER LETTER**

The resume never travels alone. Each time you submit your resume to an employer, you should enclose a cover letter, which explains why you are submitting the resume. It is the key to creating interest in your candidacy.

The cover letter is your “sales pitch.” It gives you the opportunity to draw an employer’s attention to the skills and experiences outlined on your resume. You can expand on certain courses or job responsibilities, which particularly match the position for which you wish to be considered. The cover letter also gives you a chance to highlight special achievements, which might otherwise go overlooked.

In summarizing your qualifications, highlight your most appropriate skills or background in relation to a particular position without simply reiterating the information on your resume. Refer the reader to your enclosed resume for further elaboration on your past accomplishments. Be direct and brief.

- Always send a cover letter on matching paper with specific reference to the company’s needs and your qualifications for the job. A personal letter is always best, so make an effort to get the name and title of the individual making the decision.
- Structure your cover/application letter with three or four paragraphs. This letter is written when you know of a specific opening and want to apply for the position. The purpose of this letter is to get your enclosed resume read and generate an interview.
- Clearly state why you are writing the letter and the name of the position or field. State how you heard about the opening (college career office, newspaper ad, etc.) and why you are interested in this particular company, location, or type of work.
- Outline your strongest qualifications that match the position requirements. Provide evidence of your related experience and accomplishments. Make reference or refer to your enclosed resume.
- Convince the employer that you have the personal qualities and motivation to perform well. Sell yourself.
- Close the letter by making a specific request for an interview and indicate that you will call during a specified time period to discuss interview possibilities. Show appreciation to the reader for his or her time and consideration.
- A letter of inquiry is written when you are asking an employer for information about possible job openings. Structure this similarly to the cover/application letter, but instead of using position information, focus on broader occupational and/or organizational dimensions to show that your qualifications match the work environment.

## COVER LETTER OUTLINE

Address  
City, State, Zip  
Phone  
Date

\*\*\*\*\*Double Space\*\*\*\*\*

Name of Addressee  
Title of Addressee  
Name of Organization  
Street Address or Box #  
City, State, Zip

\*\*\*\*\*Double Space\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Addressee:

\*\*\*\*\*Double Space\*\*\*\*\*

Your opening paragraph should state the reason for the letter, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying and how you learned of the job opportunity. You may want to state briefly why you are interested in the position.

\*\*\*\*\*Double Space\*\*\*\*\*

Your middle paragraph should explain how your academic and/or experiential background qualifies you for the position. Point out specific achievements or unique qualifications. Include any special skills you have that may be useful in the position. Don't repeat information in your resume, single out a few especially salient factors: expand an item or two of special relevance. Be concise and to the point.

\*\*\*\*\*Double Space\*\*\*\*\*

In your closing paragraph refer to your enclosed resume and focus on the action to follow. Indicate your desire for a personal interview. You may want to indicate your flexibility or state a time when you will be available. Repeat your phone number. You may want to say that you will call your addressee in a few days to see about arranging a mutually convenient time when you could visit. State that your personal references can be sent at their request. A specific and positive statement about what you will be doing next or what you wish for them to do is more effective than a vague hope, but don't be pushy.

\*\*\*\*\*Double Space\*\*\*\*\*

Format – Type your letter neatly on 8 and ½ by 11 inch bond paper. Keep it clean and free from errors. Type all letters individually, never reproduce them. Always address your letter to a specific person by name and title, rather than by title or department alone. Let the letter reflect your individuality. You are writing to a stranger about a subject that is of critical importance to both of you. Do not forget that we can critique resumes and cover letters here at Career Services!

\*\*\*\*\*Double Space\*\*\*\*\*

Sincerely,

\*\*\*\*\*Three Spaces\*\*\*\*\*

Typed Full Name

\*\*\*\*\*Double Space\*\*\*\*\*

Enc.

Street Address  
City, State, Zip  
Date

Richard Pratt  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Utica-Watertown, Inc.  
Human Resources Department  
12 Rhodes Drive  
Utica, New York 13502

Dear Mr. Pratt:

It has been brought to my attention through your ad in the Observer Dispatch that you are seeking a Sales Representative. As you can see by my enclosed resume, I will be graduating from Utica College in May with a degree in Management. It is my educational background and experience that I feel qualifies me for this position.

I am an ideal candidate for your company because I am eager to learn, have excellent communication skills and enjoy working with people. My past employment has provided me with experience in a supervisory position where my co-workers relied on my ability to lead and influence them in a positive way.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you personally. You can reach me daily at (315) \_\_\_-\_\_\_ or in the evenings at \_\_\_-\_\_\_. If I don't hear from you by \_\_\_\_, I will call you to answer any questions you may have regarding my qualifications and candidacy. Thank you for any consideration you can give me.

Sincerely,

NAME

Enclosure

Street Address  
City, State, Zip  
Phone  
Date

Shirley Delon  
Human Resources Director  
IRTS Foundation  
420 Lexington Avenue, Suite 1714  
New York, New York 10170-00101

Dear Ms. Delon:

I am a junior at Utica College studying Public Relations/Journalism. My interest is in a summer internship with your organization.

I will be an ideal asset to any news/informational organization. I am eager to learn, friendly and outgoing. My strength is in areas of newspaper publishing, from paper layouts to computer aided design. The classes I have taken trained me to write columns, cover news stories, features, and sports. I am knowledgeable with many different computer programs such as Aldus PageMaker, Microsoft Works, and Word Perfect on both IBM and Macintosh. My forte lies in investigative reporting. I love researching materials, fact finding, and conducting interviews.

You may reach me until December 22 at (315) 792-0000. After that date, I can be reached at my permanent residence (702) 555-9999 until I return to classes on January 16. I thank you for your time and look forward to speaking with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Name

Enc.

## ***6 TIPS FOR WRITING A PERFECT THANK YOU LETTER***

- *A typed letter is preferred, but a neatly handwritten letter is acceptable.*
- *Use the right words and phrases in your letter. Express enthusiasm, confidence, interest and appreciation.*
- *Whenever possible and appropriate, mention the names of the people you met at the interview.*
- *Address the thank you letter to the main interviewer.*
- *Keep it short, less than one page.*
- *Mail the letter within twenty-four hours of the interview.*

921 West Fifth Street  
Denver, CO 45634  
(555) 255-9898

April 11, 2005

James R. Quinn  
Human Resource Department  
Davis Enterprises  
241 Skyline Road  
Denver, CO 45634

Dear Mr. Quinn:

Thank you for the opportunity yesterday to interview for the Sales Trainee position you now have available. I enjoyed meeting you and learning more about Davis Enterprises. Your fine staff and approach to marketing impressed me immensely.

Your organization appears to be growing in a direction which parallels my interests and career goals. The interview with you, Ms. Jenkins, and Mr. Thomas confirmed my initial positive impressions of Davis Enterprises, and I want to reiterate my strong interest in working for you. My prior experience in operating office equipment plus my training in communications would enable me to progress steadily through your training program and become a productive member of your sales team.

Again, thank you for your consideration. If you need any additional information from me, please feel free to call.

Yours Truly,

Thomas Stellar

18 Central Park Street  
Anytown, NY 13455  
(555) 213-9876

March 13, 2005

Phillip Kingsly  
Executive Vice President  
ABC Corporation  
1 Industry Plaza  
Anytown, NY 14799

Dear Mr. Kingsly:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the interview, Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m., and to confirm my strong interest in an entry-level position with your company.

As we discussed, I feel that my education and background have provided me with an excellent understanding of business operations, which will prove to be an asset to your company. Additionally, I have always been considered a hard worker and a dependable, loyal employee. I am confident that I can make a valuable contribution to your Group Pension Fund area.

I look forward to meeting you again in the near future to further discuss your needs. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Melissa Newhouse

July 11, 2005

Martha Bossert, Manager  
Product Development Dept.  
Widget Corporation  
1520 Compton Drive  
Riverside, NY 1003

Dear Ms. Bossert:

I enjoyed the opportunity to meet with you and have a brief tour of Widget Corporation. The high level of creative energy among your staff, as well as their personal pride in the company's products, was obvious and very gratifying to see.

In addition to the information I shared with you in our meeting, I thought of another project I worked on that reflects the kind of contribution I could make as a member of Widget's product development team. The details of that project (the proposal and the final report, both of which I authored) are enclosed for your review.

As soon as you have completed your interviewing process, I would appreciate hearing from you to discuss my qualifications. I can be reached at home in the evening, as well as at my office during the day. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely yours,

Geraldine JobHunter  
Office: (555) 123-4567  
Home: (555) 123-3214

Enclosure