

# Cover Letters

A cover letter is used to introduce your resume. It will give you an opportunity to describe your qualifications as it relates to the position you are applying to. It is essential to customize or tailor your cover letter to the specific job posting and/or organization to which you are sending your cover letter and resume.

## What to include:

### ➤ **Paragraph one: Introduction**

A brief introduction on why you are writing this cover letter

- Reference the *specific* position you are interested in. Mention how you found it, or reference the contact that referred you
- Explain why you are interested in the role/organization
- Include a closing sentence that ties in why you feel you are qualified for this position

### ➤ **Paragraph Two: Highlight your qualifications-“Prove” your skills**

Highlight three to five of your *relevant* experiences that **directly** relate them to the job description and/or company

- Feel free to pull experiences from your education, work experience, volunteer work, team projects, etc
- For example- if the employer is seeking someone who has experience with Microsoft Excel, explain or “prove” when, how and/or where you used this skill.

### ➤ **Paragraph Three: Closing Statement**

Thank the person for their time and consideration and include your contact information, both email and phone number

## Key Tips:

- Take the time to review the company literature, website, job posting, etc. to determine the company's values and identity, and include your accomplishments and skills that align with the company
- Describe 3-5 relevant examples/accomplishments that would highlight your skills and abilities that would make you the best fit for the position
- Use the job description as your “cheat sheet”- The examples used throughout your cover letter should be relevant to what is stated in the job description
- Do not repeat word-for-word what is on your resume
- Keep it brief (one page) and in a professional format. The longer the letter, the less likely it will be read
- Type the cover letter, but sign it if you are sending a hard copy
- Proofread, proofread, and proofread! Have someone else proofread it, and then proofread it again
- Ensure your email address and voicemail greeting are professional and appropriate

### Did You Know...??

**Employers spend less than 30 seconds looking over your cover letter**

## Cover Letter Template

Your Name  
Your Address  
Your City, State, Zip Code

Date

Contact Person's Name  
Contact Person's Title  
Company Name  
Company Address  
Company City, State, Zip Code

If sending your cover letter as the body of an email (with résumé attached), you do not need to include the date or full company address information. However, you should still include your contact information at the bottom of the email below your name.

Dear Mr. / Ms. \_\_\_\_\_: (Or you may use *Sir or Madam* or *To Whom It May Concern*)

**Introduction:** The first paragraph explains the reason you are writing the letter. State your intention clearly. Include the reason you are contacting the person, or include the title of the position to which you are applying and how you learned about the opening (include the name of the source where you saw the posting). If a networking contact referred you to the organization, mention the person's name and explain your connection. NOTE: Do not start with, "My name is..." as your name is included at the bottom of the letter.

**Body:** The body of the letter is where you describe your experiences and qualifications, and/or where you adapt your cover letter to the specific job and company/organization. Emphasize relevant achievements, skills, and / or experiences. Convey to the prospective employer: why you are a solid candidate for the position; demonstrate your understanding of the business; and explain why you will be an asset. Ensure that all experiences and skills you mention are also included in your résumé.

**Closing:** The final paragraph should thank the contact for considering you for the position. Be sure to include how and when you may be contacted. Always include your email and telephone number.

Sincerely,

*SIGNATURE*

Your Name Typed

In this example, we have a job description followed by a cover letter written specifically for this role. Follow the color coded highlighting to see how to use the language and skills the employer is looking for, within your cover letter, when describing your own experience.

Job Description:

## **Audit Staff Accountant**

### **Western Financial Advisors**

As an Audit Staff Accountant with Financial Advisors Inc, you will work on various assigned segments of engagements, in some instances assuming substantial responsibility (under supervision) for small accounting engagements involving compiled or reviewed financial statements and tax returns.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Must have a bachelor's degree, **MBA in accounting or finance preferred**. Ideal candidates should have **at least three years of solid, relevant work experience**.

**REQUIRED SKILLS:** Possess **strong understanding of auditing principles, financial statements, and analytical and problem solving skills**. Demonstrate a solid grasp of business concepts, realistic judgment, and quantitative and critical thinking skills. Candidates will have **strong interpersonal skills and ability to interact with upper management and an ability to plan, organize, and prioritize multiple tasks** within a defined time period.

This excellent opportunity includes a highly professional working environment, as well as a competitive salary based on experience and a performance bonus. This position also includes fringe benefits including paid health care.

John Doe  
1111 West Wayne Drive  
Detroit, MI 48202  
313-577-4781  
[Bizcareers@wayne.edu](mailto:Bizcareers@wayne.edu)

August 12, 2013

Western Financial Advisors  
259 Vine Street  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Job Description states:  
"MBA in accounting or  
finance preferred"

To Whom It May Concern:

I am enclosing my resume for the Audit Staff Accountant position posted on WayneBizCareers.com. I am a recent MBA graduate from Wayne State University concentrating in accounting and finance. I believe this education combined with my professional experience in accounting and corporate finance make me an ideal candidate for the Audit Staff Accountant role.

Job Description States:  
"At least three years of  
solid, relevant work  
experience"

For four years prior to graduate school I worked as a collateral auditor with Smith & Adams. In this position I was responsible for reconciling outstanding audit issues and preparing audit programs. In my current intern role within the finance department of ABC Corporation I have provided cost analysis reports for projects and presented to the budget committee for the upcoming fiscal year. Through these projects I assisted with contract agreements for new office equipment in excess of \$3 million.

Job Description states:  
"Strong understanding  
of auditing principles,  
financial statements,  
and analytical and  
problem solving skills"

I am confident I bring a unique skill set combining corporate finance with audit experience would make me an asset to the Western Financial Advisors team as an Audit Staff Accountant. I look forward to speaking with you further about this role at your earliest convenience. Please contact me via email at [bizcareers@wayne.edu](mailto:bizcareers@wayne.edu) or phone at (313) 577-4781.

Job Description states:  
"Strong interpersonal  
skills and ability to interact  
with upper management  
and an ability to plan,  
organize, and prioritize  
multiple tasks"

Sincerely,

John Doe

Email for initial Contact – Cover Letter

Dear Mr. Elder:

Rachel Koehler (current president of the Cincinnati Chapter of the American Marketing Association) suggested I contact you about marketing opportunities that you may know of in your role as chairman of the Cincinnati Incubator marketing board.

Currently, I am a business student looking to relocate to Cincinnati this summer for an internship opportunity. I am eager to find a technology start up that needs marketing assistance in introducing innovations to various business markets. I believe Sabatino Specialties is this company.

I am a great fit for an emerging technology based company. Since working toward my degree I have gained experience in market research as well as interacting with current and potential clients. As my resume highlights, I understand how to position and present new marketing concepts to business audiences, such as emphasizing benefits and addressing target customer needs and concerns.

I appreciate any ideas, referrals or assistance you can offer. Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this search. Please contact me via email at [bizcareers@wayne.edu](mailto:bizcareers@wayne.edu) or phone at (313) 577-4781.

Sincerely,

Ericka Career

## Internship Cover Letter

John Smith  
12345 West Street  
City, MI 48202  
313-577-4781  
[bizcareers@wayne.edu](mailto:bizcareers@wayne.edu)

August 12, 2013

Human Resources  
XPD Stores  
1234 Name Street  
Troy, MI 48579

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to express interest in the summer marketing internship with XPD Stores that I recently found on the XPD human resources website. As a current marketing major at Wayne State University I am eager to contribute my education and skills to a successful retail organization, such as XPD Stores.

Throughout my academic career at Wayne State I have worked full-time in a variety of retail roles. In my current role at JCPenney I lead a sales team and oversee merchandising within the Men's Apparel department. I was recently promoted to this role after consistently exceeding sales goals and demonstrating leadership potential. As a business student pursuing a Marketing degree I have gained a strong understanding of business principles and applied those through various projects. In one course project I created a merchandising system for a start-up retail company. This project provided insight into incorporating technology into a retail sales environment, in which I could bring to XPD Stores as a summer marketing intern.

My success in the retail industry combined with my education make me the ideal candidate for the summer marketing internship with XPD Stores. I look forward to speaking with you about this opportunity in the near future. Please contact me via email at [bizcareers@wayne.edu](mailto:bizcareers@wayne.edu) or phone at (313) 577-4781.

Sincerely,

John Smith