

Cover Letter

What's the purpose?

The first item of communication an employer sees is not your resume, but your cover letter. It is your first chance to make a good impression. An impressive cover letter will result in a closer look at your resume. The cover letter is the personalized presentation before the resume. Preparing a quality cover letter is an important part in landing your dream job.

What should be on my cover letter?

- Address (your return address and the address of the employer)
- Salutation (Mr./Mrs./ Ms.)
- Introduction Paragraph (introduce yourself and how you heard about the job/why you want the job)
- Body Paragraph (what qualities you have that relate to the position and why you would be good at the job)
- Closing Paragraph (contact information for yourself)
- Complimentary Closing and Signature



Business Placement Center

Rehn Hall Room 113

1-618-453-2603

<http://placement.business.siu.edu/>

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**COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS**

The Address:

The return address is normally located in the top right corner of the page while the address of the employer is below it to the left.

	Your Name Your Address Your City, State Your Phone Number Your E-mail Date
Name Title Organization Address City, State, Zip Code	

NOTE: The date appears on the right side of the page two spaces below the return address and two spaces above the employer's address.

The Salutation:

The salutation is the greeting for whoever may be reading your cover letter. Try to write to a specific person. If you know who you are writing to, use Mr./Mrs./Ms., however if you do not know the marital status of a woman, use Ms. If you are writing in general to the company and do not know who will read your cover letter, use To Whom It May Concern.

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms./To Whom It May Concern:

The Introduction Paragraph:

The introduction paragraph is where you start everything off. You need to explain why you are writing and applying for a certain position. If you and the employer have a mutual contact, you can name him/her here. You must be clear about your objective. However, if you have a personal story that is relevant to the field of work or position you are applying for; don't be afraid to use it. Some of these personal stories can be a great attention getter. Make it professional though; there is a fine line between a clever story and just plain silly.

The Body Paragraph:

The body paragraph is all about what qualities you possess and what you can add to the company. You need to be convincing in order to be asked for an interview. Show how your abilities are what the company is looking for and needs. You need to support every statement you make with evidence. For example, if you say you have great communication skills, you can't stop there. You need to say why your communication skills are extraordinary. For example, you have excellent communication skills because you have given several speeches to large audiences or you communicated with others throughout a project and made it successful. You may use more than one paragraph in the body section to avoid one large block of text.

Closing Paragraph:

The closing paragraph is the last impression the employer gets of you from your cover letter. You need to be clear that you are very interested in the position. Request the next step in the employment process, a personal interview. Leave your contact information and when you are best available to talk. You may also say you plan to follow up at a certain time if no contact has been made by the employer. Usually one week's time is a typical time period to follow up. Also, always say thank you!

NOTE: Here are a few examples of helpful phrases you may use:

- "I hope to speak with you further and will call the week of _____ to follow up."
- "May I suggest a personal meeting where you can have the opportunity to examine the person behind the resume?"
- "Thank you for your time and consideration; I hope to hear from you soon."
- "May I call you for an interview in the next few days?"
- "With my training and hands-on experience, I know I can contribute to _____, and want to talk to you about it in person. When may we meet?"

Closing:

This contains your complimentary closing such as sincerely or yours truly, your signature, your name typed, your initials, and an enclosure for your resume.

Sincerely, (Your Signature) Your Name Your Initials Enclosure

Helpful Tips:

- Try to address a person, not a title
- Mention how you learned of the job position
- Match your qualifications to the employer's needs
- Show energy and enthusiasm!
- Don't make it lengthy. ONE page only!
- Proofread, there should not be any spelling errors!
- Your signature needs to be in blue or black ink
- Print your cover letter on the same paper as your resume
- Send an original cover letter for each position, don't reuse the same one
- Keep a copy of your cover letter for reference

Power Phrases:

Use variations of these phrases to sound professional and capture the reader's interest

- "I am particularly well qualified for your position and would like to have the opportunity to meet with you to explore how I may be of value to your organization."
- "I am confident that with my abilities I can make an immediate and valuable contribution to _____."
- "I would be pleased if you contacted me for an interview."
- "The opportunity to work with your client is appealing to me, and I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss the position further. I look forward to hearing from you soon."
- "This background provides the management skills you require for this position. I would welcome the opportunity for a personal interview to further discuss my qualifications."
- "I look forward to hearing from you in the near future to schedule an interview at your convenience, during which I hope to learn more about your company's plans and goals and how I might contribute to the success of its service team."
- "Please contact me at your earliest convenience so that I may share with you my background and enthusiasm for the job."
- "My personal goal is simple: I wish to be a part of an organization that wants to excel in both _____ and _____. If I had the opportunity to interview with you, it would be apparent that my skills are far-reaching."

Grey Dawg
One Saluki Way
Carbondale, IL 62901
123-456-7891
siu@siu.edu

September 13, 2011

Sara Ernst
Recruiter
Buckle, Inc
PO Box 1480
2407 West 24th
Kearney, Nebraska 68845

Dear Ms. Ernst,

As you said in your job posting on E-Recruiting, experience is life's best teacher, and I have valuable experience that can help the sales team at Buckle, Inc. Last spring, I gained a vast amount of experience during my externship with the Chicago Blackhawks. Working with over 50 front office personnel and 12 departments within the organization, I learned communication skills and teamwork that will allow me to excel with this internship at Buckle, Inc.

As I mentioned before, I have obtained excellent communication skills. With the Blackhawks, I had to communicate and interact with top executives, while coordinating the jobs and workings of the 12 departments within the team organization. I also conducted a speech at the 2011 Extern recognition ceremony to over 250 people. Besides great communication skills, I have shown enthusiasm and an interest in fashion with my activities in the SIU Dawg Pound. I was a dedicated fan, and tried to attend every game possible. I also coordinated with a team on the design of the Dawg Pound shirts, which I have been doing for two years. You will find these qualities and more described in my enclosed resume.

With all of these experiences and qualities in mind, I am particularly well qualified for your position and would like to have the opportunity to meet with you to explore how I may be of value to your organization. Feel free to contact me by phone at 123-456-7891 or by e-mail at siu@siu.edu to schedule an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration; I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Grey Dawg

GD
Enclosure

Brown Dawg
100 Saluki Way
Carbondale, IL 62901
123-456-7891
siu@siu.edu

September 13, 2011

Marci Palmer
Aldi
197 East Division Road
Valparaiso, Indiana 46383

Dear Ms. Palmer,

Making the best better. This is my goal, and this is why I am applying for your Management Training internship position. With my financial background, I would be a perfect fit for Aldi. I am experienced in managing money, as I have had my own personal investment portfolio since 2007, gaining an 11% annual return.

Besides managing my own money, I have a history of increasing others' production. During my Presidency of the Financial Management Association, I increased our budget by 23% due to new procedures I implemented with our membership payments. As President, I managed around 35 members during several charitable and educational events. I also had the opportunity to work with roughly 25-30 finance and economic faculty members analyzing projects of the organization. The Financial Management Association isn't the only organization that I improved; I also increased business by 10% with a new social media strategy during an internship with Alliance Financial within the first six months I was there.

Overall, my qualifications match what you are looking for. You can read about my qualifications in further detail on my enclosed resume. I can make valuable contributions to the Aldi team. You can reach me by phone at 123-456-7891 or siu@siu.edu to set up an interview date. I will be at the All-Majors Career Fair on October 18th, and I hope to see you there. I look forward to meeting you soon.

Sincerely,

Brown Dawg

BD
Enclosure