

COVER LETTERS

A cover letter is a letter of introduction and an invitation to the employer to read your resume. It is standard business practice to send a cover letter along with your resume, even when faxing or e-mailing a prospective employer. When sent by mail, a cover letter literally "covers" your resume, hence the name. Don't send a form letter. **Always personalize your cover letters to the specific job you want to be considered for**, ideally including the name and title of the hiring authority. If that is not possible, you can address the letter as "Dear Hiring Manager." Your cover letter should never be longer than a single page. You want to use the same font and paper as your resume. You can either copy the format for listing your identifying information from your resume, or you can write your letter using the format for writing standard business letters.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER FORMAT:

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YOUR NAME

Your street address

Your city, state zip code

(Your area code) your phone number

Your email address

Today's Date

Name of person you are contacting

Person's title

Company name

Street address

City, state zip code

Dear Mr. or Ms. _____:

Paragraph 1: Tell the employer your reason for writing. If you are writing in response to an advertisement in the paper, include the title of the position you are applying for and how you found out about it. If somebody referred you to this company, list that person's name and title and where they work. Write something positive in this first paragraph (I am very interested in applying for the position of.....). You can even use this to discuss an idea or a need they have that you discovered through your research of their business.

Paragraph 2: Briefly highlight the strengths of your resume by stressing **what you can do for the employer**. By carefully analyzing the job description, you can determine the skills the employer is looking for. Try to match the employer's requirements with the qualifications that you can offer. Sometimes an additional paragraph is needed to list all of your strengths and accomplishments, rather than trying to fit them into a single paragraph. **You can also insert a table with 'specific needs of employer' and 'your accomplishments, experience and skills' that meet those needs. A bulleted list is also fine.** Your goal is to get their attention and make it easy for them to see your value to them as a candidate. If you get their attention they will read your resume next!

Paragraph 3: Request an interview or tell the employer that you will call for an appointment.

Sincerely,

(sign your name in this space)

Type your name

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

JANE SMITH
1701 Broadway Avenue East
Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 555-1234
jsmith@yahoo.com

Aug 11, 2011

Mr. Brian Johnson
Manager, Human Resources
Allison Fay Productions
9876 Main Street, Suite 200
Bellevue, WA 98004

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I am very interested in applying for the position of Administrative Assistant at Allison Fay Productions. I was excited to see a position open at AFP as I have watched your production business grow over the past decade and have followed your company's progress and growing client list. I believe that my passion for what you do and my unique skills would benefit your company greatly.

As an administrative assistant with over 3 years of recent office support experience, I use Microsoft Word, Access, Excel, PowerPoint & Outlook on a daily basis to prepare reports, presentations, data key entry and a variety of office correspondence. My interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills are strong; all my previous work experience has required me to be in frequent contact with clients in person, by mail and by telephone.

Your Needs:	My Skills & Experience:
Multi-tasker who can juggle a variety of projects and daily responsibilities in a busy professional office.	Frontline Reception- Meeting/Greeting clients, answering 8 phone lines, responding to emails, making appointments for 5 executive level staff; maintenance of database/files, writing correspondence, budget reports & narrative reports, special events planning, and so much more!
High level of autonomy- self starter who can work independently and assist during deadlines; take on extra projects as needed.	Over 3 years working in a professional environment that thrives on personal accountability and continued professional growth.

I look forward to meeting with you and discussing how I can make an immediate and positive contribution to Allison Fay Productions.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith

Jane Smith

Electronic Cover Letters

- Electronic Cover letters can be shorter and more to the point. A short paragraph of bulleted format with 6 short sentences will suffice.
- The e-mail subject line becomes an alert to recipients of why you are contacting them. E.g. Administrative Assistant position
- No need to include the formal address of the recipient in an electronic cover letter.
- Be sure to cover any other additional information asked for when responding to an ad. E.g. salary requirements, ability to relocate, citizenship, technology proficiency, etc...

Example Electronic Cover Letter:

From: Suzy Smith suzysmith@gmail.com
To: Jon Jones jon.jones@HRinc.com
Subject: Administrative Assistant Position
Date: August 11, 2011

Dear Jon Jones:

My strong qualifications for the Administrative Assistant position you are seeking to fill have prompted me to contact you. They include:

*4 years as a frontline administrative assistant supporting external clients as well as an executive level staff of five sales executives and the CEO and CFO at XYZ Production Inc

*Attention to detail- repeatedly recognized for exemplary database management and billing/invoicing accuracy

*Ability to manage client inquiries autonomously- as the first point of contact in my current position I answer phones, greet clients (schedule appointments and provide information about products & services) and respond to email inquiries on a moment to moment basis.

*Take on special projects- I have created flyers & promotional materials for special events to promote programs/services and have taken on large bulk mailings/email/social media projects to expand customer base and company brand knowledge.

I have researched your business and services and I have some great ideas of how to assist you with your daily operations.

I will contact you soon to find out when it would be convenient to meet. I look forward to speaking with you soon to discuss my ideas in person. Thank you.

Suzy Smith, Administrative Assistant Extraordinaire

I have attached my resume for your review