

Cover Letter Guide

Writing the Cover Letter

A cover letter is an opportunity for you to tell an employer why you are interested in the position you're applying to. While your resume describes your past experience, your cover letter describes why that experience makes you a good fit for the position you're applying to.

Formatting

The cover letter needs to follow a business letter format, such as that used in the sample on the back of this resource. This includes:

- A maximum of one page long
- The same header as on your resume, including your name and contact information
- The employer's name and contact information
- The date you are writing the letter
- A formal salutation, such as "Dear Pat Johnson:"
 - *Note: Some industries may prefer that you use an honorific (Ms., Mr., Dr.)*

Opening Paragraph

Express interest in the position/employer. This paragraph should include:

- A lead: Capture interest with something unique or interesting about you professionally in the first sentence
- An introduction: What position are you applying for? Why are you excited about this employer?
- An organizational statement: List 2-3 reasons why you're a good fit

Middle Paragraph(s)

Focus on your transferable skills and experiences. This can be one paragraph, or a paragraph for each of the 2-3 reasons you've listed in your organizational statement. For each of these skills/reasons, make sure to:

- 1) provide specific examples of work you have done, academic or other types of accomplishments, and
- 2) describe how those experiences relate directly to the position and/or the organization.

In some industries, or for some people with extensive work experience, this middle paragraph may take a different form using bullet points or a table. You may wish to discuss these options with your career advisor.

Closing Paragraph

Reiterate your interest in the position and communicate next steps by inviting contact from the employer. Thank the employer for the opportunity and the time to review your application.

Additional Tips

- Each cover letter should be targeted to the job/internship that you are applying for. Have the job description available when you are writing your cover letter and highlight the skills/qualifications that are most relevant.
- If the hiring manager's name is not mentioned in the job description, do some research. If their name cannot be found, use "Dear Hiring Manager:" or "Dear (company name):"
- Keep in mind: a cover letter isn't just about you. It should demonstrate employer research and answer the question "Why?" Why are you interested? Why are you a good fit for them? Why are they a good fit for you?



Sample Cover Letter

This sample cover letter demonstrates the methods described above, and is presented as an example of how to write the cover letter. As you write your own original cover letter, use this sample as inspiration, not as a template.

LES O'HARA

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Pat Johnson
LMNO Company
1234 Business Loop, Ste. 4
Denver, CO 80123

February 2, 20xx

Dear Pat Johnson:

I discovered my passion for marketing during my internship last summer at ABC Company. As I anticipate my graduation in June 20xx, I look forward to utilizing my bachelor's degree in Strategic Communication to obtain a full-time opportunity in digital marketing. I am writing to you today to submit my resume and application for the open position of Communications Associate at LMNO Company. My communication degree, internship experience, and commitment to the beauty industry would make me a strong contributor to your team.

During my time at the University of Denver I have consciously taken courses that help me stay current on trends in digital marketing. For example, in my capstone course I spent 10 weeks developing a comprehensive campaign for a beauty brand much like the Elemeno line produced by LMNO Company. I developed a marketing strategy that utilized multi-media resources including: email lists, blogging, social media, and digital ads, specifically using Google AdWords. As the Communications Associate is expected to develop marketing campaigns independently, my experience with this project demonstrates that I am ready to contribute to the marketing campaigns for LMNO Company's products.

In addition to classroom experience, I spent last summer in a communications internship with ABC Company. Gaining hands-on experience with marketing at a similar large company to LMNO Company ignited in me my passion for this work. Specifically, I was trained in SEO copywriting and interpreting analytics reports from Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter advertising to help shape content strategy for various marketing campaigns. This experience is a valuable foundation that I will bring with me to the Communications Associate role, allowing me to hit the ground running on day one.

Finally, my commitment to the beauty industry is an important asset that I will bring the Communications Associate role. Not only am I passionate about marketing, but I am also an avid fan and consumer of various LMNO Company product lines, including Elemeno and QRS Products. I look forward to merging my personal interest in these products with my professional skills in marketing, and leveraging the connections I have built with influencers to strengthen the brands I love. This commitment is something that I believe sets me apart from other candidates, and will make me a strong asset as LMNO Company seeks to expand its partnerships with influencers on Instagram.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you regarding the Communications Associate position at LMNO Company. I have included my resume for your review and invite you to contact me with any questions at (303) 123-5555.

Sincerely,

Les O'Hara

