

THE CATHERINE CAREER GUIDE TO

Cover Letters

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is a vital component of your job application to express interest in a position, career field, and employer. It communicates a personalized message about your potential value to that organization.

Why send a cover letter?

A cover letter explains to a prospective employer who you are, why you're sending a resume, and why you'd be a good addition to their organization.

It provides you the opportunity to clarify precisely how your skills and background will contribute to the organization. A good cover letter will address some of the specific requirements for the position and attributes of the organization, and will clarify how your background will make you a good fit.

Format Fundamentals

- Make an effort to address your letter to an individual in a hiring capacity (Ms. Erica Jones)
- Tailor each letter to the specific position that you are applying for. (This means that you will have to write a new cover letter each time you apply for a new position)
- Keep your letter to **ONE** page; 1' or 1.25; margins are standard
- Highlight your resume, don't duplicate the information already included on the resume
- Avoid excessive use of "I"
- Use simple fonts such as Times New Roman, Calibri, and Arial.
- Proofread, proofread, proofread! –make absolutely certain your cover letter contains no typos or errors
- Be sure to include skills and key words from the job posting in your letter –They often search candidates by "key words"
- Include information about why you want to work at an organization or would be an asset to the department or area—many employers weigh that strongly in choosing candidates

Elements of a Cover Letter

Your Contact Information

List your address, city, state, and zip. You may include your email address and phone number if you choose.

Employer's Contact Information

List name, title, organization name, and address information of the employer.

Salutation

Address your letter to a specific individual, if possible, and use a title (Mr., Ms., Dr., etc.). If you do not have the name of a specific person, try calling the employer's main number or looking on their website for additional information.

First Paragraph

Grab the reader's attention. Be clear about the position you are applying for and how you heard about it. Be sure to convey some enthusiasm about the organization and the position as a whole. If you were referred to the position, now is the time to discuss the referral.

Middle Paragraph(s)

State why you are the best candidate for this position by pointing out skills/qualities you hold in relation to the position. Highlight any of your accomplishments, achievements, and/or how you have academically prepared for the position. Also, articulate how your skills and experience meet the requirements of the position and why you're excited.

Closing Paragraph

Briefly reiterate your interest in the organization/position, and thank the reader for considering your application, and indicate your interest in an interview.

Signature

Close your cover letter with a "Sincerely" followed by your name.

Date of mailing

Ms. Maria Sanders, O.T.
Manager, Occupational Therapy
South Memorial Hospital
3030 Builders Square
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Ms. Sanders:

It is with great interest that I am applying for your position of Occupational Therapy Assistant in the Acute Rehabilitation Unit. Julie McLain, a current Occupational Therapist with South Memorial Hospital and a graduate of St. Catherine University, encouraged me to apply.

As is stated on my resume, I am a recent graduate of St. Catherine's Occupational Therapy Assistant program. Throughout my education, I completed three separate fieldwork experiences, one of which was with XYZ rehabilitation unit. Under the direction of a licensed Occupational Therapist, I gained competencies in active communication with patients, implementation of care plans, and teamwork with interdisciplinary professionals. The mission of South Memorial Hospital, I am also committed to the purpose of giving a health care experience that is remarkable.

With respect to organizational skills, I have developed excellent time management practices over the last four years by balancing the demands of part-time work, school, fieldwork, and volunteer service. I feel that my educational background, coupled with my fieldwork and work experiences, have provided me with the practical skills I will need to be a successful Occupational Therapy Assistant.

I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications with you. I will contact you this week to see if I may provide additional information that would be helpful as you consider my candidacy. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Sign your name here - no space if sent electronically)

Type your name

Your Address

City, State Zip

Phone number

Email

Date of mailing

Ms. Sue Jones
Assistant Superintendent
Dade County Public Schools
1234 Main Road
Cleveland, OH 12345

Dear Ms. Jones:

It is with enthusiasm and interest that I am inquiring about teaching positions in your school district for Fall, 2019. I am currently a student at St. Catherine University, majoring in elementary education with licensure for K-6. I will graduate this May, with additional experience in coaching and language fluency in Spanish.

Dade County Public Schools is of particular interest to me because of your implementation of innovative teaching strategies and commitment to diversity through curriculum design. As indicated in my resume, I am currently student teaching in an urban school in St. Paul, MN. At this school, I have been challenged professionally and personally in responding to the diverse needs of a third grade, multicultural classroom. One of my most satisfying accomplishments this year has been working with a team of third and fourth grade teachers to design a new social studies curriculum that integrates multicultural competencies. We have used a variety of teaching modalities to draw in students with different learning styles, and have created lessons that allow students to address issues of diversity and difference in a respectful and supportive environment.

Classroom skills and knowledge that have made me a successful student teacher this year include being highly organized, demonstrating excellent communication skills, possessing a genuine love of learning, and the ability to instill that love in my students. My academic preparation has provided me with a strong background in child development and learning styles. In addition, I have been able to develop positive rapport with parents and school resource professionals as well as with my students. My references will speak to these abilities in more detail.

If there is any additional information that would be helpful as you consider my candidacy, please let me know. Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,
(sign your name here - no space if sending electronically)

Type your name
Your Address
City, State Zip
Phone number
Email

Date of mailing

Mr. Joe Smith
Assistant Manager of Brokerage Operations
Piper Jaffray & Co.
800 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 12345

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for the opportunity to meet at the Minnesota Private College Job Fair. Our conversation left me more excited than ever about the prospect of an entry-level Brokerage Operations position at Piper Jaffray. Currently, I am a senior with a major in Communications and a minor in Marketing at St. Catherine University, and will graduate in May, 2019. I am eager to learn more about opportunities within your department.

My work experience, coupled with my academic preparation, makes me an excellent candidate for a Brokerage Operations position. Piper Jaffray promotes itself as “an enterprise passionate about client service.” I believe that my strong communication and analytical skills would enable me to provide superior customer service and attend to client needs with accuracy and detail. I am accustomed to handling multiple projects simultaneously, and have frequently exercised this ability in both my paraprofessional position as a Resident Assistant at St. Catherine, and in my current internship with ABC Services. In both of these positions I have been responsible for providing comprehensive customer service to diverse constituencies, for planning and organizing programs and events, and for positively contributing to a team effort.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss open positions in your department.

Sincerely,

(sign your name here - no space required if sending online)

Type your name
Your Address
City, State Zip
Phone number
Email



ST. CATHERINE
UNIVERSITY

Career Development Center

www.stkate.edu/career

651-690-8890

St. Paul Campus

Coeur de Catherine 210

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