

Writing a Cover Letter Employers Will Want to Read

Cover letters are marketing tools used to create interest in you as a candidate for jobs and/or internships and are an important part of the application process. Each cover letter you write must be unique. The goal is to motivate the recipient to review your resume and ultimately invite you for an interview. A good letter will clearly demonstrate how you fit with the particular organization and position you are applying to.

Cover Letters That Get an Employer's Attention

- Well-written, without typos
- Show that the writer knows exactly what the company does and needs
- Gives the employer a sense that the applicant would become an asset to their company
- Includes attention to detail
- Shows enthusiasm and a positive attitude

Steps to Writing a Strong Cover Letter

1. **Learn about the organization.** What are its goals and mission? Pay attention to the language used to describe the organization and use similar language when talking about yourself.
2. **Review the position listing and highlight important words and phrases.** Employers will tell you exactly what they are seeking. These are your clues – use them wisely!
3. **Consider skills you have relevant to the employer's needs.** These may be from a variety of experiences; it is up to you to “connect the dots” so the employer sees how and why you meet their needs.
4. **Write a draft that clearly spells out why you should be considered for the position.**
 - Describe two or three experiences, accomplishments, or skills that demonstrate your fit.
 - Be specific and provide examples to support claims.
 - Avoid the temptation to copy wording from sample cover letters and don't repeat verbatim what is on your resume! Be sure to highlight what you have to offer, rather than what you have to gain
 - Avoid beginning every sentence with “I” (occasional use is okay).

Cover Letter Format

- Confine your letter to one page, single spaced
- Use 11-12 point simple font – the same font used on your resume
- Leave a space between each paragraph, as well as between the heading and greeting
- Align all paragraphs to the left of the page (no indentation needed)
- Use .5” to 1” margins around entire document
- Leave 3 spaces between salutation and typed name for your signature
- Sign your letter in black pen between your name and salutation (if submitting hard copy)
- Address the letter to an individual, not “To Whom It May Concern”
 - Make a phone call or check the job listing to get the appropriate person's name and title. You can also use tools such as LinkedIn or Career Shift to find the correct contact.
 - If you are unable to find the appropriate name, use *Hiring Manager, Internship Coordinator, Human Resources Department*, etc.
- Write in a professional, confident, and polite tone, but let your personality and enthusiasm for the employer and position come through.
 - Avoid negative phrases such as, “Although I never . . .” and “While I don't . . .”
- Proofread carefully and check for grammar, spelling, and typos; have someone else read it over.

Address Section

Cover Letter Format

Your Local Street Address
City, State and Zip Code
Date

Mr./Ms. First and Last Name
Title
Name of Firm or Organization
Street Address
City, State and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

First Paragraph

- Identify the purpose of this letter along with the specific position you are interested in
 - Add Job ID number if applicable
- Include where you found this job posting (i.e. HawkHire, referral, website, job fair, etc...)
- What do you know about the organization and why are you interested in them?
- 3 to 4 sentences total

Second and Third Paragraphs

- Sell your qualifications for this position
- Don't repeat verbatim from your resume
- Explain how your academic background, skills and interests, work experience, and/or activities will contribute to their success
- Refer to prior achievements; be specific and give examples
- Communicate your enthusiasm for this type of work and the employer; show why you are interested by illustrating more than superficial knowledge of the organization

Final Paragraph

- Refer the reader to the enclosed resume
- Courteously indicate your interest in an interview
 - If applicable, state if you will be in the area on a certain date and would like to schedule an interview for that date
- State if you will follow up with the employer regarding your application (and make sure you do it)
- Offer to provide any other needed information to support your candidacy
- Express appreciation for the employer's consideration

Cover Letter Example

500 Main Street
New Paltz, NY 12561

March 5, 2018

CVS Caremark
Attn: Mary Jones, CVS Internship- HR Recruiting
1 CVS Drive
Woonsocket, RI 02895

Dear Ms. Jones:

I am writing to apply for the CVS Caremark summer 2018 internship position in the corporate function of advertising or marketing. My friend, Hugo Hawkings, who completed the CVS internship last summer told me about the opportunity, and I then explored your internship webpage. I believe that my interest in the field, complemented by the strong standards set by this program will help me to be a solid addition to the summer internship team. I have completed the Online Application, and my résumé is enclosed in this Application Packet.

My academic success and campus involvement over the past two years at State University of New York at New Paltz have shaped me into an excellent CVS intern candidate. I possess strong time management and organizational skills, which are exhibited by my extracurricular involvement and full-time student status. Through working well with others while in leadership positions, such as being the president of my Greek Life organization, my sense of adaptability and teamwork developed. I have gained knowledge regarding ethical practices in advertising and marketing through extensive research and an academic focus on ethics. Leadership, responsibility, and a willingness to learn are all personality traits that I have developed as a college student.

Your corporation's dedication to increasing knowledge among college students has prompted my interest in the program. This hands-on experience would allow me to learn from a professional team while being able to use the knowledge and skills I already possess from past projects. The supportive learning environment that CVS provides for their interns is the perfect entrance into this exciting field, and I am hopeful to become a part of it.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to meet with you to further discuss how my contributions can be beneficial to the CVS internship program. Feel free to contact me via email at paltzn257@hawkmail.newpaltz.edu or by phone at (888) 222-1111. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Natalia Paltz

Next Steps: Create or update your cover letter; come see us at the Career Resource Center!

Career Resource Center
Humanities 105
(845) 257-3265
careers@newpaltz.edu

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm

Drop-in Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 1:30 to 4:30pm and Friday 10:00am to Noon

Check our website for a schedule of upcoming events, programs and applications
www.newpaltz.edu/careers

The Career Resource Center addresses topics including:

- Major-to-Career Advice
- Career Assessments
- Resume and Cover Letter Review
- Choosing a Major
- Graduate/Professional School Search and Applications
- Mock Interviews
- Volunteer, Internship, and Job Search Coaching



- Exclusive access to volunteer, internship and full-time postings in our online database
- Instant access to resources including
 - Event listings and registration
 - Career finder and explorer
 - Salary guides
 - Document library: Resume Samples and department specific Career Advising Handbooks
 - 500,000 national postings
- Log in through my.newpaltz.edu, select **Internships and Careers**, then **HawkHire**