

Cover Letter Guidelines

Month, Day, Year

Your Street Number and Address
City, State Zip Code

Name of Person You are Writing
Title of Person You are Writing
Name of Organization
Street Number and Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear (His/Her Name):

In your initial paragraph, state the reason for the letter, specific position or type of work for which you are applying and indicate from which resource (Career Development, news media, friend, alumni) you learned of the opportunity.

Find out who the organization is serving, how it performs compared to competitors, what current trends affect that industry. Then indicate why you are interested in the position, the organization, its products or services--*above all, what you can do for the employer*. Note how your work and field experiences/internship experiences, research projects/studies, volunteer activities, extracurricular background, and career aspirations relate to the organization's interests and goals. You will need to outline your strongest qualifications that match the position requirements. As much as possible, provide evidence of your related experiences and accomplishments. Do not repeat the information the reader will find in the resume verbatim. This section can be written in one, two, or three paragraphs.

In the closing paragraph, refer the reader to the enclosed resume or application which summarizes your qualifications, training, experiences, or whatever media (i.e. reference list or written references; writing, publications, or work samples; portions of portfolio) you may be utilizing to present yourself. Indicate your desire for a personal interview and your flexibility as to the time and place. Repeat your phone number and/or e-mail in the letter and offer any additional information that may be helpful in scheduling. For example, state that you will be in the city where the organization is located on a certain date and would like to set up an interview. Or, state that you will call on a certain date to set up an interview. Or, ask if the organization will be recruiting in your area. Finally, thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Typed Name

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR WRITING COVER LETTERS

- Design your letters to be work-centered and employer-centered, not "me" centered. Focus on your skills, accomplishments and experiences (what you can do as opposed to who you are). Your letters are marketing tools that should address the needs of employers and motivate them to learn more about you.
- Address your letters to a specific individual with his or her correct title and business address.
- Keep the letter to one page. Be clear, concise, and positive. Eliminate unnecessary words and avoid rehashing your resume.
- Produce an error-free, clean copy.
- Tailor your letters for each situation. Generic and mass-produced letters are unprofessional.
- Show appreciation to the employer for considering your application.
- Always keep your reader in mind. Make your letters easy to read and attractive.
- Be timely. Demonstrate that you know how to do business for yourself and, by implication, for others.
- Be honest. Always be able to back up your claims with evidence and specific examples from your experience.
- Your goal is to communicate that you are a responsible person with a positive attitude who knows how to be productive in a professional environment.

FirstName LastName

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July 18, 2008

Ms. Kara Snyder
Studio Art Coordinator
Pittsburgh Center for the Arts
1047 Shady Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Dear Ms. Snyder:

I am applying for the Art Camp Counselor internship that I learned about through the University of Pittsburgh FutureLinks System. I am currently a sophomore at the University of Pittsburgh majoring in Studio Arts. Working for the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts is especially appealing because I have visited the Center on a number of occasions since moving to Pittsburgh. Being a camp counselor would be rewarding because I had attended an arts camp in junior high and remember the influence it had in supporting my goal of pursuing an artistic career.

I am confident that I have the artistic, helping, and organizational skills that would be necessary to be a good arts camp counselor. I am comfortable with a wide variety of artistic media, including drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, and photography. Computer graphics is an area that I am newly learning, but I feel I could contribute to the learning of younger students in this area as well. My role in tutoring a fourth grader in reading through the East End Cooperative Ministry is an example of my commitment to helping young people. Other community service group activities through this program exposed me to working with students in a wide age range. Through both my studio work and community service activities, I have used organizational skills that I expect would be needed in a camp counselor position.

Enclosed is my resume for additional information about my background. I will be available for work beginning May 24. I will call you next week to inquire about the timing of the selection process and whether you would be interested in interviewing me. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

First Name Last Name

FirstName LastName

Enclosure