



Cover Letter

Your **cover letter** is often your first introduction to a prospective employer; therefore, you want to make sure you are putting your best foot forward. An effective **cover letter** will provide an introduction, explain the purpose of writing, and create interest to generate an interview.

The letter should demonstrate your written communication skills and outline how your skills, education and experience **match the employer's needs.**

Your Cover Letter Should Be...

1. CONSISTENT WITH RESUME

- Font size, type, and letter layout should be business format
- 10-12 point font size
- Standard fonts (Arial, Times New Roman)
- Adequate margins- top/bottom, left/right (1/2"-1")- ideally same as your resume, but not a must
- Printed on quality resume paper
- When sending electronically (email) you may type letter into the text area of the email and attach your resume to the email (preferably Word Doc or PDF), or you may attach both as documents to your email

2. EASY TO READ

- Well-organized
- No typos- the minute an employer sees a typo, you are out of the running for a job
- Simple block format with left flush margins
- One page (3-4 paragraphs)

3. RELEVANT TO EMPLOYER'S NEEDS

- Addressed to a specific individual- this is important - it shows you have done your research
- Differentiate yourself from other candidates
- Be concise and highlight what is most important
- Unique and customized for each specific position- pull in keywords from the job description

WHEN RESPONDING TO A JOB ANNOUNCEMENT...

- Read the announcement carefully
- Pay close attention to the job description and focus on those duties in your cover letter
- Match your qualifications with what they want
- Follow instructions carefully. If the announcement requires 3 letters of recommendation, send 3 letters. If the announcement states "No Phone Calls", do not call.

AVOID...

- Irrelevant details
- Starting every sentence with "I" or "my"
- Flowery phrases or vague statements that say nothing
- Unnecessary personal information
- Abbreviations or acronyms unfamiliar to the employer
- Copying and pasting the same letter for each position

Cover Letter Outline

Your Present Address
City, State, Zip

Date

Name of Contact Person
Title
Organization/Company
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear (Contact Person - Be formal: Dr./Mr./Ms./Mrs.) *if not certain if married female, use Ms.

Opening Paragraph (should address interest and define career objective)

- Create an opening sentence that will make the reader want to continue reading
- State the job for which you are applying and explain how you learned about the position
- Mention the name of the person and what relation they are to the company (if any), who referred you to the organization and vacancy – preferably a colleague of the contact person

2nd Paragraph (should develop your career objective and identify what you have that they want – your resume should provide facts to support this)

- Mention a few qualifications you think would be of greatest interest to the employer – use keywords related to the position/industry
- Tell why you are interested in the company and/or type of work
- Indicate any related experience, educational background, or specialized training that might increase your employability

3rd Paragraph (should highlight specific experience)

- Make a positive statement of your skills/abilities
- Using examples, demonstrate skills/strengths you will bring to the position
- List accomplishments and achievements and how they will transfer to the job
- Indicate your willingness to relocate if applicable
- Refer the reader to the enclosed qualifications in your resume

4th Paragraph (should request an interview) Be positive in your attitude!

- Close by making a specific request for an interview
- If you plan on following up, give an approximate time in which you will follow up with the company to further discuss employment opportunities
- Refer to enclosed documents (resume, references list, writing samples, etc.)- unless you have already done so in the earlier paragraphs
- Make it easy for the person to contact you. List telephone number and days/times (optional) when you can be reached. Also list an email address. (Even though this information is on your resume, state it here)

Sincerely,

(Handwritten signature if you are sending a physical letter)

Type your first and last name

290 Ram Road
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

September 12, 2014

Michael Lynch
Director of Undergraduate Admissions
Admissions Office
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
285 Old Westport Road
North Dartmouth, MA 02747

Dear Mr. Lynch,

I am interested in applying for the position of Admissions Counselor at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth listed on the university's employment opportunities website. I believe that my educational background, skills, and work experience have prepared me well for the duties and responsibilities of the position.

Obtaining a bachelor's degree in marketing provided me with knowledge in the areas of consumer behavior, strategic marketing, and promotional strategies. This education will be an asset in successfully representing the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth as an Admissions Counselor. While working as an admissions assistant at Shepherd University, I found my passion for recruitment and communication with prospective students and their families. In this position, I became very effective in developing working relationships with my clients, while perfecting marketing and public relations methods for recruiting. My professional goal is to further expand on these skills in the role of Admissions Counselor at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

In addition to my recruiting experience, I gained a lot of professional advancement through my marketing internship with Breakthrough Events Inc. I mastered efficient teamwork, learned successful event planning techniques, and effectively employed variety of marketing strategies. Both of my employment experiences required frequent utilization of social media for marketing and public relations purposes. The enclosed resume further outlines my skills, experiences, and qualifications for the position of Admissions Counselor.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss my qualifications for the position. I will contact you the week of June 29 to follow up on the status of the search. Please contact me at 304-876-4356 or jessie.miller@gmail.com if you have any questions or would like to schedule an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessie Shepherd