

Cover Letters

The cover letter accompanies your resume to potential employers and gives you the opportunity to introduce yourself to them. Cover letters are comprised of at least 3 paragraphs and should be written in a manner that highlights the skills, abilities and accomplishments listed on your resume. Additionally, the overall tone of your cover letter should be conversational and professional while relaying your enthusiasm for the company. Your goal is to motivate the employer to read your resume and invite you for an interview.

Inasmuch, the cover letter should hone in on your areas of expertise by summarizing your experience as it relates to the requirements for the job or internship for which you are applying. Be sure to use transitional words to segue from one thought and paragraph to another. Furthermore, never mail a prospective employer your resume without a cover letter. If you are meeting them in person, for instance at a career fair, you would not give them a cover letter.

Below are some things you do not want to do as it relates to your cover letter.

Do Not:

- Address your letter "To Whom it May Concern". Use the company's website or other online tools to find out who makes the hiring decisions and address the letter to them.
- Write one general letter and send it to numerous employers. Be sure to tailor your cover letter to every employer you are interested in and make sure that the skills you highlight are in line with the skills they seek.
- Write a cover letter that is more than one page and in a fancy font.
- Assume that you've made no errors. Proof your cover letter, use spell check and have a career counselor review it to ensure that it conveys the best picture of you.

The Body of a Cover Letter

Paragraph 1:

This paragraph is a brief introduction of your reason for writing the letter and the position for which you are applying. In this paragraph you want to mention how you heard about the job or internship and how it aligns with your career goals, training and education. Your goal is to connect with the reader.

Paragraph 2:

This paragraph of about 8 sentences may need to be broken into two. In this paragraph you must demonstrate your knowledge of the employer by matching your background (work experience, transferable skills, education, etc.) with their needs; which requires you to research the employer. If you have it, use the job description for the position you are seeking to properly connect your experience with that required of the desired applicant. Be sure to use language that shows your desire to contribute to the company and your field. Your goal is to show that you are the candidate they seek.

Paragraph 3:

This optional paragraph can be used to highlight your leadership and volunteer experience as well as any academic or professional awards that you have received. Be careful however not to just list your awards. You want to talk about your involvement and the professional, personal and educational benefits you have gained as result thereof. Keep this paragraph to 3-4 sentences. Your goal is to show that you are a well-rounded individual who possesses leadership skills and enjoys making contributions to the community.

Paragraph 4:

This final paragraph is your closer and consists of 2-3 sentences that state your sincere interest in the position and employer. State your interest in obtaining an interview and provide your telephone number and professional email address for them to contact you. It is imperative that you thank the reader for their time and consideration. Your goal here is to convey genuine interest in the position and company and appreciation for the reader's time. When emailing your cover letter, do not leave space for your signature just type your name. When mailing your cover letter, leave enough but not too much space for your signature and then type your name underneath. Your signature should be neat and easy to read.

Tiffany Apples
1234 Apple Lane
Appleton, NC 22222
(910) 111-0000

January, 9, 2010

Ms. Carmen Mango, Hiring Manager
College Recruiting
Reach Media, Inc.
13760 Noel Road, Ste, 750
Dallas, TX 75240

Dear Ms. Mango:

My name is Tiffany Apples and I am interested in the Business Affairs internship that Reach Media, Inc. advertised with the Office of Career Services at Fayetteville State University. The description for the internship at Reach Media attracted me because it is consistent with my academic preparation and previous internship experience as well as my career goal to provide legal assistance to a major media corporation.

Currently, I am a senior at Fayetteville State University and will graduate with dual degrees in --- Mass Communication and Political Science in May 2011 with plans to attend law school immediately upon graduation. As you will note from my enclosed resume, my work experiences have exposed me to a variety of settings. I am comfortable in a fast-paced environment where meeting deadlines and handling simultaneous tasks as well as the ability to write and conduct research are essential. The skills and hands-on training I have acquired have only reinforced my desire to learn more about Reach Media.

In addition to my academics, I am involved in many campus activities to include Model United Nations, Toastmasters and the Pre-Law Society, and volunteer my time with Teen Court and the Radio Reading Service all while maintaining a 3.75 GPA. Yet, I remain focused on my career goals and successfully manage all the responsibilities I accept. It is with the same sense of commitment and eagerness that I would bring to Reach Media.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss how my talent and potential make me an excellent choice for Reach Media, Inc. Please feel free to contact me at (910) 111-0000 or tapples@broncos.uncfsu.edu.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,
Tiffany Apples

Enclosure: Resume