

HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER

A COVER LETTER ADDS PERSONALITY AND DETAIL IN ADDITION TO YOUR RESUME

Your cover letter is like introducing yourself with a personal handshake. It is an essential, professional letter that should accompany your resume when applying for a position. **Highlight your most important and related skills as they pertain to the position, be sure to communicate to the employer WHY you are interested in their organization.** Employers hire applicants who not only possess the necessary qualifications and skills, but who also fit the organization's culture and support their mission and values. Make sure it is professional, error-free, and well written. Employers typically read cover letters quickly, so use simple, clear sentences. Choose every word carefully.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF TO HELP YOU WRITE YOUR COVER LETTER:

WHAT ARE YOU APPLYING FOR?

- Address your letter to a specific person if the information is available on the website or job posting. If not, you may address it as "Dear hiring committee".
- Attract the reader's attention by **clearly stating your reasons for writing.**
- Identify the position you are applying for. State how you heard about it. Don't make the reader guess what you are asking for; be specific.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK FOR THE ORGANIZATION/COMPANY?

- Do your research. **Employers like to hire people committed to their mission, vision, and values.** Learn about their products and services. Just as Bethel focuses on their mission and values, so do corporations and nonprofits. Explain WHY you want to work for them. What is it about their mission and values that you support and why?

WHY ARE YOU THE BEST PERSON FOR THE JOB?

- Demonstrate your past accomplishments and skills by **highlighting your most important and related skills as they pertain to the position.**
- Address the **KEY-WORDS and JOB QUALIFICATIONS** and provide behavior-based evidence for these skills.
- Ex: If a qualification is "strong communication skills" then be sure to address this skill in your cover letter, citing an example of how you've demonstrated this in the past.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

- Close your cover letter in a courteous, pleasant manner. **Reiterate why you are excited for the position, what you bring to the table and communicate that you want to be a part of the organization.**

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BASICS:

- 1 page in length - do not go over
- Same font as your resume
- Font size between 10-12
- Your heading should look similar to your resume with your contact information

FORMAT:

- Your contact information
- Date you are sending the cover letter
- Company's address
- Greeting
- Opening/ introduction paragraph
- 1-2 body paragraphs
- Concluding paragraph
- Salutation

DETAILS:

Greeting:

Address your letter to a specific person if the information is available on the website or job posting. If not, you may address it as "Dear hiring committee".

Opening Paragraph:

State why you are writing, identify the position for which you would like to be considered, and indicate how you heard of the position. Mention any individuals who may have referred you to the position. If you are sending an inquiry letter, simply indicate the type of work or position you are seeking. Be specific.

Middle Paragraph(s):

Show how you can be useful to this particular organization – why should they hire you? Describe what strengths/experiences you have to offer this employer. Highlight particular classes, jobs, internships, achievements, and extracurricular activities as they relate to the position in which you are interested. You might want to use one of the following approaches: Identify three reasons for the employer to consider you for the position. Describe your previous accomplishments as they relate to the position. Illustrate the relationship between your skills and experience and the position you are applying for. Use specific examples. Describe why you want to work for their organization – focus on mission/values. Refer the reader to your enclosed resume for additional information.

Closing Paragraph:

End your letter by summarizing why you want this position or to be a part of the organization, and also highlight what you would love to contribute to their mission. If you are applying for a specific job which has been posted, you might say, "I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications in more detail. I can be reached at (email and/or phone number)".

Signature:

Write "Sincerely" and either type your name or include an electronic signature

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Your First & Last Name

St. Paul, MN

Phone Number

LinkedIn URL

email@bethel.edu

January 1, 2021

Employer Name

Title

Company Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (*Employer Name*):

I am writing to express my interest in the (*Position Title*) at (*Organization Name*). I was excited to learn about this opportunity on the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits website. Specifically, I resonate with your mission of training, educating, and empowering individuals to develop independent living skills as evidenced through my case management internship experience at Neighborhood Residence.

During my education at Bethel University, where I will graduate in May 2021 with a B.A. in Sociocultural Studies, I developed an ability to relate to diverse groups of people and gained in depth knowledge of community resources. In addition, my work as a Resident Assistant provided numerous opportunities to demonstrate my excellent oral and written communication skills, as I facilitated small groups on a weekly basis and collaborated with my team and supervisor. I also gained valuable experience and the ability to relate to individuals from a variety of backgrounds through my volunteer work as a youth mentor. Not only did I successfully demonstrate flexibility in managing my school and work loads, but I was recognized by my advisor for doing so with a strong attention to detail amidst a variety of projects and responsibilities.

Because of my commitment to integrity and compassion for all people, I am eager to support the values that (*Organization Name*) proudly holds. Through my two years of experience working as a Program Coordinator, I have developed a passion for training, coaching, and assisting developmentally disabled residents in their decision-making and daily life skills. Furthermore, I am committed to continuous learning in order to provide excellent service to clients and the community as shown by my participation in a voluntary continuing education course.

I am passionate about empowering people and connecting them to community resources while demonstrating energy, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude to the clients that you serve. It would be an honor to contribute to your organization in this way. These characteristics and my strong work ethic make me an ideal candidate for this position. Attached is my resume for further reference and I can be reached at (651) 638-0000 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(insert electronic signature here if able)

Type your name here

SAMPLE COVER LETTER 2

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Your First & Last Name

St. Paul, MN | 763-111-0000 | LinkedIn URL | email@bethel.edu

January 1, 2021

Employer Name

Title

Company Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (*Employer Name*):

In response to the online posting for the (*Position Title*), I am eager to apply for this position at (*Organization Name*). Considering my experience in marketing, writing, and sales, I believe I can significantly contribute to your mission of supporting the development of citizens in their community.

During my education at Bethel University, where I will complete my B.A. in Business with an emphasis in Marketing and a minor in Communication Studies in May 2021, I gained a solid foundation of social media marketing and strong writing skills. For two years I have enjoyed working as a staff writer for the campus newspaper, The Clarion. In addition to my four bi-weekly columns, I have been recognized for my leadership in assisting with the lay-out and design of the paper, including my intermediate graphic design skills.

In my current marketing internship, I am responsible for creating monthly press releases, which demonstrates my strong writing skills and ability to communicate both internally and externally through email marketing. In addition, my ability to increase the total number of website hits by 15% shows that I am a self-starter and am able to communicate effectively. My previous sales internship demonstrates my strong ability to work efficiently and resourceful, as I was able to increase revenue by 10% while decreasing expenses by 5%. Through this, I was also noted for my contributions as a strong team player.

Because of your commitment to developing self-sufficiency in every person, I would welcome the opportunity to promote your mission to donors and partners in the community. Attached is my resume, which further demonstrates my commitment to your mission. I would enjoy further discussing my fit with you and I plan to contact you by next Friday. If you would prefer to speak with me before then, please call me directly at 651-638-0000. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Insert electronic signature here if able)

Type your name here