

QUICK TIPS

Writing Cover Letters

{ ABOUT COVER LETTERS }

A cover letter is a type of tailored job search correspondence that accompanies a resume, introduces an applicant, elaborates on qualifications and, most important, provides a way for applicants to promote themselves.

In this job market, cover letters are being scrutinized closely. Cover letters are used as a writing sample, a barometer of the applicant's interest and creativity, and an indicator of how he or she would fit in with the organization's mission. Therefore, time and effort should be dedicated to writing effective cover letters.

Cover letters are just as important as your resume. This writing sample should highlight your skills and experiences and demonstrate how they are relevant to the job or industry. We highly recommend that you send a cover letter whenever you apply for a job or internship.

{ BASIC COVER LETTER TIPS }

- No longer than one page and no more than 4 paragraphs.
- Address your letter to a specific person - the person with the power to hire you. Get their name and title correct. If you cannot find a name, you can address the letter to the "Recruiting Coordinator" or to the "Hiring Manager."
- Tailor your letter to the requirement of the position and the employer's needs. Know your reader and his/her organization.
- Send an original letter, not a copy. If faxing or emailing a letter/resume, always send an original in the mail.
- Your letter should be easy to read, printed neatly on a single page of good quality paper (8.5x11 matching your resume paper) and free of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.
- Use the active voice and keep your tone positive and professional.
- Write each letter in your own words, not something you cribbed out of a book. Canned letters get canned responses or no response at all.
- Proofread, proofread, proofread!!! Then have someone else proofread it for you. Do NOT depend on spell check and grammar check on the computer. Drop it off in Career Services for a critique. Don't depend on your own proofreading!

**Adapted from UNCW.edu*

{ COMPONENTS OF A COVER LETTER }

Introduction

Who are you and why are you writing? Reveal your purpose and interest. Identify your position and your source of information. Introduce your themes. Applicants can briefly address why they are interested in this position and organization in this paragraph as well.

Body

How has your education, previous employment, or other experiences prepared you for the position? Outline your strongest qualifications that match the position requirements based on the themes you selected. As much as possible, provide evidence of your related experiences and accomplishments. Refer to your Resume. Demonstrate how your prior skills, experiences, and values match and would contribute to the organization. This is your chance to market yourself and emphasize your strengths. Let the employer know why you are interested in working for them. This also demonstrates you have done your research.

Conclusion

Thank the reader and reaffirm your interest in the position and the company. Indicate the next steps to be taken and close the letter professionally. Avoid endings that lack confidence.

{ SENDING THE COVER LETTER }

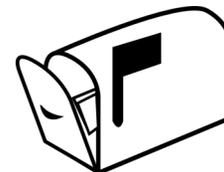
EMAIL

Many employers conduct business by email. The cover letter can be sent via email in either the body of the message or as an attachment.



POSTAL MAIL OR FAX

If sending by mail, be sure to use high-quality bond paper for your resume and cover letter. Also, do not forget to sign cover letters if sending copies by mail or fax.



CREATE A COVER LETTER ONLINE THROUGH:

<https://nccu-csm.symplicity.com/students>

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR ADDITIONAL CAREER SERVICES RESOURCES



CAREER SERVICES

North Carolina Central University | 1801 Fayetteville Street | PO Box 19585 | William Jones Building, Lower Level
Durham, North Carolina 27707 | (919) 530-6337 | nccucareerservices@nccu.com

123 My Address Lane
Durham, NC 27707
919-555-1234
johanna.berry@eagles.nccu.edu

May 15, 2014

Ms. Sharon Burns
Managing Editor
Hamilton Journal-News
721 Wabash Ave.
Hamilton, OH 40446

Dear Ms. Burns,

I am writing to express my interest in the General Assignment Reporter position at Hamilton Journal-News, recently posted on Eagle Career Network through NCCU Career Services. I am currently a senior at North Carolina Central University and am extremely excited to see this opportunity to join the reporting team at Hamilton Journal-News. I believe my education and experience makes me a good match for the position according to the description you have provided.

While completing my Bachelor of Arts in English at North Carolina Central University, I have demonstrated my strong writing skills. These skills are evident by my experience as a reporter for The Campus Echo newspaper. I contributed articles to the general assignment desk and was assigned to the minority affairs beat where I often worked under pressure to meet strict deadlines. I believe my strong work ethic and sense of independence will be beneficial to your newspaper. I have enclosed a resume with additional details of my qualifications.

The chance to work at Hamilton Journal-News is very important to me and is a logical step for my career. I hope to meet with you soon to discuss how my experience would benefit Hamilton Journal-News. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (919) 555-1234 or via e-mail at johanna.berry@eagles.nccu.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Johanna K. Berry

Johanna K. Berry

Sample Cover Letter

CAREER SERVICES

North Carolina Central University | 1801 Fayetteville Street | PO Box 19585 | William Jones Building, Lower Level
Durham, North Carolina 27707 | (919) 530-6337 | nccucareerservices@nccu.com