

# COVER LETTER BUILDING

## Cover Letters 101

### COVER LETTER PURPOSE

Your cover letter can complement your resume by making it easy for the employer to see how your experience and interest connect to the position. You should introduce yourself to the potential employer, highlight your relevant skills, and convince them to interview you.

### COVER LETTER NO NO's

- **Templates:** You may find templates online and use them at your own discretion. Keep in mind that it can be difficult to edit the structure of the cover letter or to make changes to content in the future. Instead, we recommend you create a document yourself, even if it mirrors the template.
- **Personalization:** It is important that you do not use the same exact cover letter for every job you apply to. Although you can use the same general layout, it is important to change your cover letter to cater to each job. Use keywords/phrases from the job description to stand out.

### COVER LETTER PLEASE DO'S

- **Be specific:** Give a specific example/story about a time that you exemplified one of the skills that the job description lists. Make sure to talk about the situation, task, action, and result.
- **Be confident:** A cover letter is all about showcasing how you are right for the position before being able to talk with the employer. Instead of saying "I think I would be a good fit for this role because..." say "I would be the best person for this role because..."
- **Use The Job Description:** Before submitting your cover letter for a job, go through the description and highlight key words or phrases that apply to you and your experiences. Use those exact words in your cover letter wherever you can.
- **Stay Consistent and Organized:** No matter how you format your cover letter, make sure you stay consistent throughout. Example: All words should be the same font and size.

## COVER LETTER FORMAT

- **Header:** Your name, city and state location, email and phone number at the top of the page. It would be great for this to be in the same format as your resume. In addition to this, include the date. Keep it consistent!
- **Greeting/Salutation:** You will want to address the cover letter to the person identified as the main contact in the job posting. If there is no person identified, you can use “Human Resources” or “Search Committee”.
- **Opening Paragraph:** Use the first paragraph to express your interest in the specific position you are applying for. If they have multiple positions open, don’t make them guess which job you are referring to. Then give them a reason that you would be a benefit to the organization.
- **Middle Paragraph (s):** Highlight the professional, education, and/or personal achievements that make you an ideal candidate for the position. If you are truly a great candidate, you should be able to address most of the qualifications outlined in the job posting. Don’t assume that they will think you have a certain qualification if you leave it out. It is important that you do not just relist the experiences in your resume. Focus on one or two stories or experiences and talk in depth about them and how they are applicable to the position. This can be one or two paragraphs.
- **Closing Paragraph:** Briefly re-state that you are interested in the position and why. Then express your desire to be contacted for an interview or for the next steps.
- **Complimentary Close and Signature:** As with a professional letter, end with “Sincerely”, followed by your signature and your printed name.

**Josh Michaels**

**4 Church St. | Sometown, NJ 08888 | (555) 555-5555 | [josh@somedomain.com](mailto:josh@somedomain.com)**

June 1, 2011

Katherine Yu

HR Director

Anytown, NJ 08999

Dear Ms. Yu:

Your advertisement for an HR assistant fits my qualifications perfectly, and I am writing to express my interest in and enthusiasm for the position.

After completing a business degree from Rutgers University in May, I enrolled in a human resource development program to further enhance my credentials in the field. Course highlights include: Leadership in an Organizational Setting, Performance & Task Analysis in Human Resource Development, and Technology in HR Settings.

Based on your description of the ideal candidate, I also offer:

- A solid educational foundation in organizational development, employee training and development skills and knowledge of how to use technology to improve individual/organizational performance.
- A proven ability to build rapport with individuals from all cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- A track record of excellent performance as a part-time/summer employee concurrent with full-time college enrollment.
- Technical proficiency in database programs (including Oracle) and MS Office Suite.

If you agree that my services would be valuable to ABC Company, I would very much like to meet in person to learn more about your HR support needs. Please feel free to call me at (555) 555-5555 or email at [josh@somedomain.com](mailto:josh@somedomain.com).

Thank you for your time and review of the enclosed resume, I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely yours,

Josh Michaels

Enclosure

Sarah Taylor

Philadelphia, PA 19110

April 15, 2015

James Weston, Assistant Director

American Association of Community Service Organizations

Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Weston:

I enclose my resume in response to your announcement in The Washington Post for a Community Research Analyst.

I am especially interested in this position for several reasons. First, I have six years of thoroughly enjoyable experience in working closely with community service organizations at the local and state levels. Second, I have conducted several practical studies of community service organizations which have resulted in strengthening their roles at the local level. Finally, my research work has placed me at the center of the policy process where I have worked effectively with government officials and other community groups.

I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to discuss how my experience might best relate to your needs. My combined research and community relations approach may be of special interest to you since it has resulted in some innovative approaches to community action.

I look forward to learning more about your research needs and sharing some of my experiences with you.

Sincerely,

Sarah Taylor