Cover Letters

What is a Cover letter?

A cover letter accompanies a resume and introduces your interest in the organization and the specific position for which you are applying. Cover letters should be professional and, like resumes, carefully proofread for errors. A cover letter can be delivered traditionally as a hard copy, but is also an appropriate body or attachment of an emailed resume submission.

Cover letters can be an additional means of selling oneself to an employer. Each cover letter should be targeted to a specific company and position, and reflect knowledge of the company’s needs and goals. Use specific examples of why you are the person for the job. It is usually the first document an employer sees, so it is often the first impression you will make. A

Cover Letter Basics

- Use to complement your resume, not repeat the same information. It’s a chance to give specific examples and go into detail about your experiences.
- Address to a specific person. If you cannot, consider using “To Hiring Manager.” Use “To whom it may concern” as a last resort.
- Keep it short, concise, and direct (3-4 paragraphs, no longer than 1 page).
- Address the employer’s concern of “What’s in it for me?”
- Proofread for grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes; ensure cover letter is addressed to the correct person and company.
- Create a new cover letter for each position - mass producing is impersonal and less effective.
- Research and display knowledge of company.
- Tactfully ask for an interview.
- Always type the letter and use a conservative font. Match the font type and size to your resume.
- Do not forget to update your cover letter to include the new company or individual’s name to the particular job you are applying for.
- Be sure all information is relevant and correct for each company, including organization and individual names, position titles, and credentials.

The experts can help make your cover letter extraordinary!

Make an appointment with a Career Counselor today by calling 208-282-2380 or visiting the Museum Building, Room 418

Here is How a Cover Letter is Written:

[Table]

- Street Address
- City, State Zip Code
- Date
- Name of Contact
- Title
- Organization
- Street Address
- City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Xxxxx:

State the position you are applying for and perhaps how you became aware of it and why you are interested. Give a brief synopsis of why you are a top candidate or offer a sincere compliment about the company.

Offer your sales pitch, outlining what you can do for the employer. Use specific examples on how your qualifications match the job you are applying for. Remember, you are interpreting your resume, not repeating it. Consider using bullets to outline your top skills or speak more in-depth about a qualification. Be sure to tailor your cover letter to the job description.

Thank the employer for their time or consideration. State your interest in meeting with employer to follow-up. Indicate that your resume is enclosed or attached.

Sincerely,
(written signature, blue or black ink)

Typed Name

www.isu.edu/career
Museum Building 418
208-282-2380
careers@isu.edu
Ellen Johnson
1234 South 8th Avenue · Pocatello, ID 83204 · 208-123-4567 · johnell@gmail.com

August 11, 2012

John Smith
Manager
Layton Communications, Inc.
123 5th Ave.
Pocatello, ID 83204

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am submitting this letter as a formal request to be considered for the Public Relations Specialist position. I am confident I am qualified for this position and can make a significant contribution to Layton Communications, Inc.

This position requires an individual with experience creating and disseminating tactical media. As a recent graduate in Communications, I offer professional competence in this area. For four months, I worked as an intern with United Way, where I completed 24 press releases, corresponded daily with clients via email, implemented and produced a monthly newsletter sent to over 800 clients using Photoshop, and scripted a segment on Good Day Utah. After one month, my consistent performance qualified me to coordinate a popular donor recognition event, honoring high profile donors and grossing over $250,000 for charity. Due to my educational background, I possess superb verbal and written communication skills. With my experience and skills, I am confident you will appreciate the value I offer as a Public Relations Specialist.

I have enclosed my resume for your review, and would like the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss how I may benefit Layton Communications, Inc. I can be reached by phone at 208-123-4567, or by email at johnell@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Ellen Johnson

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Job Description for Ellen Johnson:

**Public Relations Specialist**

Layton Communications, Inc. manages a small number of quality clients and is the only public and media relations firm that specializes in education reform.

**Responsibilities:**
- Represent the company by disseminating important information to clients
- Prepare press releases, brochures, newsletters, and other PR documents
- Establish and maintain client relationships by communicating with them on a regular basis
- Coordinate, plan, and promote company events and other related business endeavors

**Qualifications:**
- A Bachelor’s Degree in a related field of study
- A minimum of 4 months work experience
- Excellent communication skills
- Excellent computer skills and knowledge of Photoshop

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A Less Common Format:

January 5, 2013

Carol Martinez
HR Manager
Pocatello University Hospital
223 Main Street
Pocatello, ID 83204

Dear Ms. Martinez:

As a Registered Nurse with 3+ years experience working in both small clinics and large hospitals, I am well positioned to join your team and make a positive contribution. My qualifications include the following:

- Analyze and interpret patients’ histories, symptoms, and physical findings, to develop appropriate diagnoses in a busy 40 bed critical care unit.
- Actively maintain current knowledge of state legal regulations for registered nurses.
- Registered Nurse in the State of Idaho.

I bring to this position excellent work experience, a strong focus on the patient, and a proven track record of professionalism. I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to discuss the Registered Nurse position and ways in which I might help the entire team achieve greater patient care. Thank you for considering my qualifications and I look forward to talking with you soon.

Sincerely,
Tim Hansen

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Please Note:
The “Ellen Johnson” cover letter example is coordinated with the “Ellen Johnson” resume example that can be found on the back page of the Resume handout in the Career Center.

The underlining in this cover letter is intended to illustrate the direct connections to the “Ellen Johnson” job description that the applicant made when writing her cover letter.

DO NOT UNDERLINE IN YOUR ACTUAL COVER LETTER. THIS IS INTENDED FOR LEARNING PURPOSES ONLY!

www.isu.edu/career
Museum Building 418
208-282-2380
careers@isu.edu