



COVER LETTER

A Cover Letter is a 1 page (3-4 paragraph) letter written in direct response to a job or internship opening that allows you to **grab the employer's attention, explain what you have to offer, and convince them as to why they should hire you for that particular role.** It's imperative to write your letter with a specific job in mind—either a current opening or a job title you intend to apply to in the future.

Your cover letter allows you use full sentences to elaborate on your resume, make a clear connection between the employer's needs (listed in the job description) and what you have to offer, and display enthusiasm or passion for that job, field, and/or company.

WRITING YOUR COVER LETTER

Craft a new, targeted Cover Letter for every job you apply to. Your time will be better spent creating and sending one personalized letter per day rather than blasting out 50 generic ones. How do you react to mass emails—delete them? Employers hate spam too.

- ✓ **Think like the employer.** The employer wrote or approved the job description—so use it as your guide. Keep the the job description open as you are writing your cover letter so that you can show examples of how you meet those needs. Avoid writing a generic letter without a job in mind. If you don't see an opening yet, simply Google the job title you hope to apply to in the future (i.e., Financial Analyst, Geologist, Marketing Intern), identify common requirements, and target your content to that title.
- ✓ **Identify 3 key qualities, skills, or responsibilities the employer wants in an ideal candidate.** Highlight important phrases that make you think "I can do that" or "I have done that!" Pull those words into your cover letter. Then back them up with *examples* from your internship, classes, or part-time jobs that shows you have achieved similar results, completed related duties, or displayed similar qualities (time management, teamwork).
- ✓ **Be concise**—only offer examples relevant to the job you are applying to, and **write in a professional tone**, matching your industry's vibe. For conservative fields, keep it formal. For creative fields (writing, graphic design, advertising), sell yourself in the same language you'd pitch a story or idea. Either way: be professional.

DO

- ✓ Stick to 1 page. Keep it concise.
- ✓ Use pronouns (I, me)
- ✓ Use full sentences

DO NOT ...

- ... address it "To Whom it May Concern"—do your best to find the correct contact person.
- ... start with: "My name is ..." as the employer can see your name in your sign-off.
- .. repeat your resume word-for-word. Use your cover letter to elaborate.
- ... talk about what the job can do for you. The employer is interested in what *you* can uniquely offer.
- ... write "I'm probably not the best candidate" or "Even though I don't have experience." Why talk them out of hiring you? Focus on the positive: what you *can* offer.
- ... be casual, sarcastic, or immature. Avoid "Ever since I was a kid, I dreamed of..." Keep it professional.

USE YOUR COVER LETTER TO CONNECT THE DOTS FOR THE EMPLOYER

Scenario: You are a senior applying to a Public Relations job. You identify this responsibility from the job description as one you want to highlight.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

"The ideal candidate will have **public speaking experience** and should be **comfortable** in front of **large audiences.**"

You have a similar experience on your resume, but the employer might miss the connection.

RESUME:

Activities Club, Jan. 20XX-Present
Public Relations Chair

- Presented an educational workshop to 800 college students on how to engage in responsible social behaviors.

COVER LETTER:

"I am very **comfortable** speaking in front of **large audiences**. My **public speaking experience** includes having presented an educational workshop to 800 students on the risks of binge drinking and tips on how to safely engage in social activities. Attendees rated the presentation a 4.5/5 for effectiveness.

*Use your Cover Letter to make a clear **connection for the employer** between what the job requires and what you can offer.*

Pull a few key phrases from the job description while blending in your own examples to prove that you can meet the job requirements.



COVER LETTER FORMAT

YOUR NAME

1 Ben Franklin Drive ▪ Philadelphia, PA 19104
name@student.lasalle.edu ▪ 215.123.4567
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/fullname](https://www.linkedin.com/fullname)

*Use the same header
as your resume to
create a uniform look.*

Date

Chad Brooks, MPH
Vice President of Public Health Operations
City Health Organization
123 Ben Franklin Dr.
Philadelphia, PA 19102

*If sending via email, copy from here down
and paste the content into the body of the
email; attach your resume as a PDF*

Dear Mr. Brooks,

I was very excited to learn of your opening for a Public Health Intern at City Health Organization, which I saw advertised on idealist.org. As a junior pursuing a B.S. in Public Health at La Salle University with several years of leadership, community service, and outreach experience, I am confident that I would offer a great contribution to your company.

Throughout my college experience, I have been heavily involved in community projects that allowed me to develop strong advocacy and leadership skills. As a Zipcar Brand Ambassador in Philadelphia, I had the opportunity to interact with people from various socio-economic backgrounds and to learn how to convey an organization's vision to the public. In addition, as a member of the Violence Against Women Act, I advocate on behalf of students on how to increase awareness about assault on campus. In addition, for the past 3 years as Resident Assistant, I have served as a peer mentor to 80 college students and implemented educational activities around diversity, campus safety, and academic performance. By holding this leadership position, I have learned to focus on others' needs and find ways to help students thrive in the community. My ability to connect with and relate to people should prove to be an asset to your organization.

I am particularly interested in your public health program in light of the dire need for health improvement in the United States. CHO's innovative approach to creating a team of Health Educators to conduct site visits and personally work to repair the needs of the community is one that amazes me.

I would appreciate the opportunity to share more with you about the ways I can contribute to your company. I have attached my resume, and please do not hesitate to contact me at (215) 123-4567 or name@student.lasalle.edu if you have any questions. Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

PERSONAL TOUCH

Be sure to address your cover letter to a specific contact person. If not offered, search the internet to find the name of the hiring manager. Writing "To whom it may concern" or "Dear Hiring Manager" looks like junk mail.

1st Para. Intro

State your interest in applying to the job or internship (using the exact job title and company name) and how you found out about the job (website, personal referral). Next, describe who you are (year, major), and offer a brief "thesis statement" with the **top three reasons** you are a strong fit for this role. Be prepared to back these up with examples in the following paragraphs.

2nd Para. I can offer what you need

Elaborate on each of the three reasons you believe you are a strong fit to the job. Intertwine key phrases from the job description that you feel you can meet, and use **EXAMPLES** from your work or college history to show the employer what you are capable of. Examples can include ways in which you have achieved related results, executed similar duties, or exhibited the desired qualities (communication, team work, etc.). Use keywords or jargon common to that industry or field.

3rd Para. Why *this* company/role?

Employers, not surprisingly, are drawn to candidates who express a genuine interest in *their* company or position. Google the company and browse its website and social media to ensure that you know the services or products it offers. Ask yourself: why is this company one you're interested in applying to? What separates it from competitors—what does it do better or uniquely?

4th Para. Closing

Politely request that the employer invite you for an interview. Include the exact ways to get in touch with you (phone, email) in case your resume gets separated. Thank the employer for their time and say that you look forward to hearing from them soon.

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT CONTACT PERSON

1. Use Handshake, La Salle's job database—it is password protected for students only, so employers list their full contact info (a major perk over public job boards like Monster.com)!
2. Use the email address as a clue for your search (Ex: jsmith@mercyhospital.com, Google "J Smith, Mercy Hospital") and you'll find Julie Smith, Nurse Recruiter. Address it to her.
3. Call the company and ask!