A cover letter should accompany each résumé you send to a prospective employer. Your cover letter is your introduction; it describes who you are, why you are interested in the position, and the value you can add to the organization. Do not duplicate your résumé in your cover letter. Instead, use your cover letter to add a personal touch and highlight the most relevant experience on your résumé, which tends to be more data-driven. The following are some cover letter recommendations:

**Language**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Check over the spelling and grammar several times, gaining feedback from Career Center counselors, friends and family members. Misspellings and typos on a cover letter can eliminate the possibility of interviewing with a company. |

**Format**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | The cover letter should be brief, no longer than one page in length if sent via hard copy mail.   Emailed applications should contain a cover letter in the body of the email with a résumé attached.   Typically, three or four short, easy-to-read paragraphs are adequate.   Keep your cover letter looking professionally; use a standard font (i.e. Times New Roman, Ariel, etc.), and avoid using bolded or underlined text. In special cases, such as when applying for design positions, students are encouraged to consider a more unique résumé aesthetic as a way to show their work. |

**Content**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | If you have recruiter contact information, address your cover letter to him or her. If you do not have recruiter contact information, apply to a blind advertisement with, "Dear Recruiter:"   Find out as much about the position and company as possible and tailor each cover letter toward the opportunity for which you are applying. This might involve some research. Illustrate that you have the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the position requirements. It will show them that you have done your homework and assure them that you are a good match for the position. It will also avoid the appearance that you have sent them a generic cover letter, which could have been sent to any company for almost any position. If you are responding to an advertisement, make sure that you address all of the position qualifications.   If you have developed a good networking relationship with an individual in the organization, upon their approval, use their name in your cover letter.   Communicate that you can add value to the organization. Associate the company product with your capabilities. Avoid making the common egocentric mistake of describing why the position would be good for you. Organizations are interested in how your skills, abilities, and ideas will benefit their enterprise.   Let the cover letter reflect your individuality, but avoid appearing too familiar, humorous or ironic. Describe what is particularly appealing to you about this company and/or position. If you admire some of their recent work, a current project or their philosophy of operation, let them know.   Close the cover letter by taking the initiative and requesting an interview. List your contact information for follow-up purposes. |

**Example 1**

Simon T. Brainsample  
75 Via Limone  
New York, NY 11220

April 22, 2005   
  
Gully T. Gumby  
Specifics Manager  
Fawlty Systems, Inc.  
Torquay, NY 00000   
  
Dear Mr. Gumby,   
  
Your advertisement in Job Choices '05 prompted me to contact you about entry-level positions in electrical engineering at Fawlty Systems, LTD. The product engineering program at your company is very appealing. I am particularly interested in your project on digital systems. In May of this year I will receive a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from The Cooper Union and I hope that we will have an opportunity to discuss employment possibilities before that time.

In addition to the knowledge I've obtained from my education, my experience as an assistant to a plant engineer has provided me with an excellent background in the practical aspects of electrical engineering.

During my years at The Cooper Union, I have taken on many additional responsibilities. As a freshman, I managed the Student Council and played varsity tennis. In my junior year I was employed by the Student Services Office where I received first-hand experience in organization, teamwork and responsibility. I hope that you will seriously consider my enclosed résumé, which provides full details of my qualification.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to speaking with you. I may be reached between the hours of 9am and 5pm at 212 355.4343.

Sincerely,

Simon T. Brainsample

**Example 2**

Simon T. Ellis  
1 Astor Place  
New York, NY 10003

March 15, 2006  
  
Mr. Brian Davidson  
Senior Vice President  
Anchor Systems, Ltd.  
345 First Avenue  
New York, NY 10004  
  
Dear Mr. Davidson:  
  
I learned about the Electrical Engineering position with Anchor Systems, Ltd on the Cooper Career Connection Web site, and I am interested in further discussing this exciting opportunity.

As a graduating electrical engineer undergraduate student at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, my academic background, coupled with my relevant work experience, has given me the tools and ability necessary to add value to the position, and ultimately your organization.

My interest in electrical engineering is long standing and my well-rounded background makes me an excellent candidate for the Electrical Engineering position. I secured an IT Analyst Internship with Credit Suisse First Boston in the summer of my freshman year, and gained exposure to the financial industry, while enhancing their software by developing search subroutine and upload script modules. As a sophomore, I served as Treasurer on the Student Council and played varsity tennis. In my junior year, I attained a position in the Student Services Office where I received first-hand experience in organization, teamwork, and responsibility. I have earned several awards while a student at Cooper Union, including the Bausch and Lomb Award for Excellence in Science, in June 2005 and Dean's List in the Fall of 2004.

Please find my attached résumé, which provides full details of my qualification. Feel free to contact me at (212) 353-4567 or [ellis@cooper.edu](http://career.cooper.edu/students/eng/coverletter.php) for any following up purposes. I appreciate your consideration and look forward to further discussing the Electrical Engineering opportunity with you.

Sincerely,  
Simon T. Ellis