

COVER LETTER WRITING

Do you need assistance with writing a targeted cover letter?

Utilize this guide to write a compelling cover letter highlighting your interests and experiences.

Formatting

- Length: One Page
- Font Style: Times New Roman, Arial, Garamond or Verdana (Tip: use same font style on resume)
- Text Size: 10, 11 or 12 (Tip: full page of text, minimize white space at top and bottom)
- Format: All information is left justified; utilize returns between paragraphs (Tip: do not indent paragraphs)

Cover Letter Sections

- Heading: Copy and paste resume heading (name and contact information) to the top of cover letter (Tip: brand your application)
- Employer Information: Include recruiter name, title, department, mailing address (Tip: utilize contact information provided in job/internship description; Tip: research employer web site for recruiter contact if not provided in application instructions)
- Opening Paragraph: Reference job/internship and employer and how you learned of the opportunity; discuss your education, relevant coursework; explain your interest and motivation to pursue this position (Tip: target the letter to the employer; Tip: discuss learning objectives for internship)
- Middle Paragraphs: Include 2-3 middle paragraphs focused on a specific experience and/or skill (Tip: connect your experience to the employer and opportunity); discuss paid, volunteer, leadership, student organizations, classroom/course, and internship experiences (Tip: provide detailed examples and quantify information)
- Concluding Paragraph: Restate your interest in the opportunity; include a follow-up statement when you will contact the employer (Tip: only insert a follow-up statement on applications that permit applicant follow-up and/or you have the employer contact information); end document with a thank you statement
- Valediction/Close: Sincerely, Your Name

Cover Letter Strategies and Considerations

- Position Description: Review the job/internship description for clues on the skills and information to emphasize
- SWOT Analysis: Complete a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis of your application and ability to perform the position responsibilities (Tip: a SWOT analysis is also a great way to prepare for an interview)
- Business Writing: Active style of writing (Tip: limit use of passive voice, being verbs)

LACS Library Resources for Building a Cover Letter

- Visit the LACS Library in FAC 18 for resources on cover letter writing
 - o Vault Report Guide to Resumes, Cover Letters and Interviews
 - o Cover Letter Magic

Optimal Resume

Optimal Resume is a powerful online building resource for writing your resume and cover letter. You may review sample cover letters and create your own document through a variety of tools.

- Access Optimal Resume through the External Links tab on your BTT Gateway account and register using your "mail.utexas.edu" address
- Visit <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/lacs/services/coaching/resumes/OptimalResume> to learn more

COVER LETTER SAMPLE

Review the example below to develop your cover letter. Use the tips in the cover letter section for assistance with creating your content and determining which experiences to highlight.

Rebecca Valdez Brand letter by using your resume heading

321 Luxury Ln. ■ Austin, TX 78123 ■ Cell: (512) 123-4567 ■ rebecca.valdez@yahoo.com Professional email address

June 25, 2010 Date submit application

Jane Walker
Human Resources Manager
Enterprise Rent-A-Car
000 Car Avenue
Austin, TX 00000 Personalize letter when possible

Dear Ms. Walker, Reference employer in letter

I write to express my interest in the Enterprise Rent-A-Car Management Trainee program following your company information session at the UT Austin campus Tuesday evening. I am a senior at The University of Texas at Austin and will graduate in August 2010 with a degree in Economics and a minor in Business Administration through the McCombs School of Business. I believe your Management Trainee program will provide me with the knowledge and skills necessary to run my own successful business in the future and to learn strategies for maximizing profits while developing positive business relationships with customers. Include graduation date Tell how you learned of the opportunity

As the President for the Delta Phi Omega sorority, I led a team of 12 committee members to develop the organization's goals, purpose and strategies to recruit students. I also organized two campus events attracting over 700 students to inform them of our organization and our commitment to serve the community. In keeping with the mission of our organization, I promoted local non-profit organizations at sorority events, which generated over \$7,000 for initiatives to aid the homeless and the elderly. My experience working with a team as well as managing the sorority's community programs has equipped me with the leadership skills necessary to be a successful Management Trainee. Specific skills and experiences Discuss your motivation SWOT analysis to determine strengths

My experience as a Head Organizer for the Unity Talent Show taught me to work with a team of diverse individuals to plan and to coordinate an event attracting over 500 students annually. I maintained a \$3000 budget and presented my ideas to the team to build marketing strategies for the event. In addition, my interpersonal skills helped me negotiate with vendors to reduce costs. I believe my experience operating within a small budget and ensuring the show's quality will prove to be a strong asset with the marketing requirements of this position. Connect experience back to employer Quantify achievements

I am excited about the prospect of becoming a part of the Enterprise Rent-A-Car team and learning from experienced professionals in the field. I will contact you the week of July 5th, 2010 to follow-up on my application and to answer any additional questions you might have. Thank you for considering my application, and I look forward to speaking with you soon. Show enthusiasm Include relevant skills

Sincerely, End with appreciation

Rebecca Valdez

Rebecca Valdez Be proactive

For More Help: Visit Liberal Arts Career Services in FAC 18 during resume and cover letter walk-in hours or contact us at 512-471-7900 to schedule an appointment with a Career Coach.
Online assistance is available at: <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/lacs/services/coaching/resumes>