

Cover Letters

Cover letters are meant to provide context for the resume and provide detailed examples of how your relevant experience has been utilized in similar situations. Unlike a resume which focuses on the breadth of your experience, cover letters are meant to go into depth about several key skills relevant to the position you are applying for.

Cover Letter Templates

Firstname Lastname

(123)-888-8888 | H@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/firstnamelastname | YourOnlinePortfolioOrWebsite.com

Month, Day, Year

Name of recipient (hiring manager)

Title of recipient

Company name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

If you don't know the gender, you can write the first and last name or "Dear Hiring Manager"

Dear Ms./Mr.(last name of recipient),

Give a brief overview of who you are and why you want to work at that organization. Be specific about why you want to work there to show that you have done your research on the organization. If you have met with a recruiter or someone who works at the organization mention their name and title and something they said that made you want to apply there and that you believe differentiates them from others in their industry. State the position you are applying for and how you learned of the opportunity. Write briefly a few skills you bring to the role and why you think they are a good match for the company.

This paragraph should start with a thesis sentence describing one or two key skills mentioned in the job description. The second sentence will give an overview of the places you demonstrated those skills (such as jobs, internships and classes). After you tell the reader the places you demonstrated these skills, give them an in detail example of a time where you proved that you do this skill well. Describe this example in one or two sentences and use the **"CAR"** method (Context, Action, Results). The cover letter is about DEPTH not BREADTH; you don't need to describe every experience you have had in your cover letter.

This paragraph is optional. All cover letters should have 3-4 paragraphs. If you decide to include this paragraph, follow the format described in the format above and describe a different skill. Please note that you do not need to have a paragraph discussing your work experience and a paragraph describing your academic experience. Employers are interested in you describing how you have demonstrated that you can apply what you have learned in class.

End with a brief and polite closing paragraph. Say you are looking forward to discussing your qualifications with them and thank them for their time. If you have another relevant skill that is easily described and relevant (example: you are fluent in Spanish and the company works with Spanish speaking clients) this is a good place to discuss that skill in one sentence.

Sincerely,
Your full name.

Full Name

(123)-888-8888 | H@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/firstnamelastname | YourOnlinePortfolioOrWebsite.com

Date

Mr./Ms. ABC DEFG (Try to include a name of a person at the company if possible)

Title

Company Name

Street Address

City, State & zip code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Opening Paragraph

- Introduce yourself and the purpose of your letter
- Write why you want to work at that organization (be specific, if you are applying to Nike, don't say you want to work there because you like sports, say something specific about that brand)
- State what position you are applying for and how you learned of the opportunity
- If you have networked with anyone at the organization, mention who you spoke to and why that convinced you to apply
- Write what skills you will bring to the organization, *not* how you will benefit from the position

Middle Paragraphs (there should be no more than two of these paragraphs)

- In the first sentence of each paragraph, introduce the one to two skills that prove that you're a good fit
- In the following sentences describe the places you have demonstrated that skill (ex: internships, work, school etc.)
- Choose one to two or examples/stories that illustrate how you used that skill and how it added value to the organization

Closing Paragraph

- Thank the hiring manager for their time
- Re-express your interest in the role
- Demonstrate knowledge of the employer
- Mention that you look forward to hearing from them. For e.g. "I look forward to hearing back from you and your team"

Sincerely,

First Name Last Name

Cover Letter Checklist

Before sending out your cover letter, always double (and triple) check to make sure everything is accurate, true, grammatical, spelled correctly, and the best representation of you for that position. Use this checklist to ensure you have the basics for a good application.

FORMATTING & LAYOUT

- ☐ Cover letter is 1 page or less.
- ☐ Name is at the top, big, bold, and clear.
- ☐ Text is between sizes 10-12.
- ☐ Text is legible in a readable font.
- ☐ Margins are balanced and between 0.5-1 inch wide.
- ☐ Cover letter is organized and easy to read.
- ☐ Header matches the resume header and includes my name and contact info.
- ☐ Address the letter "Dear Mr./Ms. [Hiring Manager's name]." (If I don't know their gender, address the letter "Dear [First + Last Name]." or Dear Hiring Committee)
- ☐ Sign off cordially and formally with "Sincerely."

WRITING & EDITING

- ☐ Everything is spelled correctly.
- ☐ Industry specific words are spelled correctly according to each company's preferences. (Is Communication supposed to have an "s"?)
- ☐ Cover letter is skimmable—you can discern my experience in 30 seconds or less.
- ☐ Everything is in the active voice.
- ☐ Use strong action verbs.
- ☐ Writing is clear and illustrative.
- ☐ Write to the audience (i.e. the hiring manager).
- ☐ Writing is confident and engaging in a professional tone.
- ☐ It's short—between 200 and 350 words for the main text.

CONTENT

- ☐ Include the job title and company name in the body of the letter.
- ☐ Show interest in the company's work and goals.
- ☐ The skills and experience match the employer's requirements.
- ☐ Cover letter does not repeat, rehash, or summarize the resume.
- ☐ Expand upon the resume through anecdotes, examples, or short narratives.
- ☐ Anticipate and answer potential questions the hiring manager may have.
- ☐ Show accomplishments and results, not just tasks.
- ☐ Focus on what you can do for the company, not what they can do for you.
- ☐ Everything included is a true and positive representation of yourself.
- ☐ All dates and locations are accurate.

Sample Cover Letter

Jessica Jones

(617) 353-3490 * dmeagle@bu.edu [linkedin.com/in/JessicaJones](https://www.linkedin.com/in/JessicaJones)

Melissa Morris
LaForce + Stevens
41 East 11th Street
6th Floor
New York, NY 10003

Dear Ms. Morris,

I am writing to apply to the Spring 2016 public relations internship at LaForce + Stevens. The agency's innovative digital branding strategies, especially for high-end fashion clients, are redefining the industry, particularly in its work with Perry Ellis. My experience in public relations and background in fashion design would make me a great fit for the fast-paced LaForce + Stevens team.

As an account executive at PRLab at Boston University, I created a social media strategy for my client Ben & Jerry's. I collaborated with other account executives to integrate innovative ideas into our online brand conversations to engage potential and existing followers. Throughout the semester, we have increased social media followers by 45% and engaged the community—especially the thousands of Boston-area students—in the brand through traditional and social media. In addition, I built a media list for Ben & Jerry's of contacts in local, college, and national media to gain more earned coverage for the brand. So far, two local papers have published articles based on the press kit I assembled and pitches I wrote to journalists.

In addition to my social media experience, I have been designing and making clothes for years in class and on my own. I understand the demands of the fashion industry and have the keen sense of style necessary to create brand strategies that compellingly represent high-end fashion brands. From my public relations experience and background in fashion, I would be an enthusiastic, creative asset to the public relations department here.

I look forward to talking to you further about my skills and qualifications for the spring 2016 public relations internship at LaForce + Stevens. I can be reached by phone at (617) 353-3490 and email at dmeagle@bu.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Jones

Email & Cover Letters

Some jobs require you to email your resume and cover letter. When you have to submit your applications this way, it is common to include a short note. These notes should include the following.

Address it to the hiring manager

If you're supposed to email jobs@bigcompany.com, send the application there, but include the name of the hiring manager—whoever you addressed your cover letter to.

Keep it formal

Be polite and courteous.

Keep it short

Elaborate explanations and introductions don't belong here. Two sentences are plenty; three is more than enough.

Include the job title in the email body and subject

Make sure the application ends up in the right folder. Tell them how (file format) and where (attached) they'll find the important docs (resume + cover letter).

Include your contact info and name

Put your name and contact info in the body of the email and the email signature.

Sample note when emailing your application

Dear Ms. Hiring-Manager,

I am pleased to submit my application for the account associate position at Big Ads Firm. My resume and cover letter are attached in a PDF. Please contact me at myemail@bu.edu if there is a problem with the file.

Thank you for your consideration,

Hopeful Applicant

Hopeful Applicant

myemail@bu.edu

617-753-27363

Linkedin.com/in/hopefulapplicant