

Cover Letters

Professional Development Seminar

Why Write a Cover Letter?

- Writing sample
- Connect the “dots” from YOU to the POSITION
 - Help employers see the “match”
- Provide context/make resume come to life
- Differentiation: show you’ve done your research

Remember, this is a formal letter that should be extremely professional.

Cover Letter Header/Opening

Kate Smith

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4/5/2018

Kronos, Inc.

900 Chelmsford St

Lowell, MA 01851

Dear Hiring Manager,

- ✓ Same header from your resume
- ✓ Date
- ✓ Company Address
- ✓ Avoid “To Whom It May Concern”

Content Breakdown

Opening

How did you learn about this job opening?

If you have been referred by a contact, include the person's name.

What is the title of position and the reference number (if listed)?

Why do you want to work for this organization?

Briefly convey your knowledge of their products, services, and/or projects.

Middle (2-3 Paragraphs)

What 3-4 key skills do you have that relate to this position?

Match your experience to the job description.

Make it easy for the employer to see how you are qualified for the job.

Draw on skills from work experience, volunteer experience, internships or co-ops, and classes.

What projects did you work on – either at a job or as part of a class?

Use the PARK formula – Problem-Action-Result-Knowledge.

Closing

What action will you take?

Where can they reach you?

State that you look forward to an interview.

Thank the person for their consideration of your application.

Matching Skills to the Job Description



“I’ve met with over 50 students in the past three weeks. The students who have — in my opinion — stuck the landing in their cover letters have something in common:

They are taking the time to understand the work of an organization, what they would be asked to do and to articulate how they could contribute. They aren’t saying, “I am the perfect candidate.” They are showing compassion and demonstrating “why you may want to work with me.”

It’s not a subtle difference; the compassion approach is far more compelling to me.”

-Chandlee Bryan, Writer & Career Coach

Job Description Sample

Identify key points in the job description to address in your cover letter.

Vicor Corporation

Vicor Corporation designs, manufactures and markets modular power components and complete power systems used in the aerospace and defense electronics, enterprise and high performance computing, industrial equipment and automation, telecommunications and network infrastructure, and vehicles and transportation markets.

Engineers use the combined advantages of Vicor components to create compact, highly functional, economical products with streamlined development cycles that minimize time to market.

Job Title:

Manufacturing co-op position

Job Description:

In this position students will work independently and with Manufacturing Engineers in the areas of product, process, equipment and material specifications, testing, evaluation, cost analysis, qualification and implementation. Assist Manufacturing Engineers with process improvement and failure analysis projects. Students will support Manufacturing Engineers through the use of process control techniques such as i.e. SPC, LEAN, 5S & 6 sigma methodologies. Data collection, interpretation and analysis will be taught and required as part of the position. Students will perform mechanical design of fixtures and equipment using SolidWorks. Students will be responsible for their individual projects, including the planning, scheduling, management and reporting. This position will expose the students to real-world manufacturing engineering responsibilities in a mass customization production environment.

Qualifications:

- ① Desirable candidates are pursuing BSME (or similar) with a minimum 2.70 GPA and have completed at least two years of academic program.
- ② Computer proficiency is required in SolidWorks, Excel, Word & PowerPoint.
- ③ Candidates will have strong communications skills, both verbal and written, be self-motivated, independent, and enjoy problem-solving.
- ④ Must welcome hands-on tasks, constant change, and a demand for accuracy.

Cover Letter Sample

Bridge your experience and knowledge directly to the qualifications and key points on the job description.

Student Name

Address

(978) 123-4567

First_Last@student.uml.edu

Date

Hiring Manager

Vicor Corporation

Company Address

City, State Zip code

Note: The **boldface type** is to illustrate how the letter was customized to the description; it is not recommended that you use bold in your cover letters.

Dear [Employer Name or "Hiring Manager"]:

①

I am very interested in continuing my experience in manufacturing power systems and modular components and was immediately interested in the manufacturing co-op position at Vicor. I am in my third year of mechanical engineering at the University of Massachusetts Lowell where I maintain a 3.5 GPA and have completed course work in the study of materials behavior, 3D CAD modeling, and electronics. I have also proudly served in the U.S. Marines where I gained strong communication and problem solving skills, and exemplified self-motivation and independence.

③

②

In addition to my academic and military experience, I have worked as a mechanical and electrical intern. In that position, I worked on power systems and assisted with complex troubleshooting of manufacturing, repair, and testing processes. I learned how to support Engineers with process improvement and failure analysis projects. I utilized 3D printing to test designed components made in SolidWorks. As a project assistant and facilities manager, I attained technical proficiency in Microsoft Excel, Word and PowerPoint. I was challenged with hands-on tasks and met the demand for accuracy while managing warehouse facility operations.

④

I feel that these experiences make me an ideal applicant for this position. I have attached my resume for your review. I look forward to discussing how I can contribute to your organization. I welcome you to contact me with any questions or for additional information. I can be reached at (978) 123-4567 or First_Last@student.uml.edu.

Sincerely,

Student Name

Encl: resume

It's all about the Details!

So far in my educational career, I have become quite proficient in the C language and fairly-trained in C++. I have learned the concepts of Abstract Data Structures and Sorting Algorithms in the C language. I have also worked on a couple of academic projects that make we well-versed the aforementioned languages and concepts that have also given me practice in the Linux and Visual Studio environment and unit-testing software.

Though I have not much experience in iOS and Android application development, I am quite proficient in Object oriented programming, providing me the foundations of coding along with my eagerness to learn new skills.

Aside from my relevant technical experience, I would also like to bring to your attention that I am heavily involved in extra-curricular activities as a student leader in clubs on campus. This involvement has given me the opportunity to hone my communication skills as well as leadership skills. Lastly, my business minor has instilled in me key aspects of professionalism.

Example 1 – Cover Letter

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am a student from the University of Massachusetts Lowell currently pursuing a B.S. in Mathematics in addition to a minor in Computer Science, and I am actively seeking a three month co-op for this summer. After reading your company's Software Application Developer opening on CareerLINK, I decided to write this letter to elaborate on my capabilities as a computer scientist as well as to say why I wish to work for Velocity. For me, the ideal work environment is one which enables the individual to do work of a high class. As someone who finds it very important to produce things of quality, it is easy for me to recognize Velocity as a company which prioritizes the very same thing.

Throughout my educational career, as a mathematician and computer scientist, I have been learning and practicing how to communicate effectively; whether in oral or written correspondence, expressing mathematical proofs, or writing self-documenting code. I have also been trained in top-down methodology, where the programmer designs their code to be modular, where each function is unique. I have found that this allows for faster debugging, as well as an easier time improving on old projects. All of these skills have helped to make me a more effective programmer.

While in the classroom and in lab, my classmates and I are required to use Linux operating systems to complete our assignments. However, I use Windows recreationally, as well as to complete homework assignments which typically involve a substantial amount of programming. I am also very familiar with Visual Studio, which I understand to be supported by Qt.

Though I have not written specifically in C#, I am quite proficient in C. In the classroom, I have been taught to use C as if it were in fact an object oriented language; creating opaque objects and writing data structures from scratch to solve non-trivial problems.

I will send my resume to jobs@velocity.us as per the instructions on CareerLINK. In the meantime, I will look forward to hearing back from you. Feel free to contact me at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxx@student.uml.edu. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
John Doe

Example 2 – Email

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to express my interest in the Electrical Engineering R&D Co-op position which was posted on CareerLINK at University of Massachusetts Lowell. As an undergraduate electrical engineering major with previous military experience, I believe that my course work as well as industry experience make me an excellent fit for this position.

In addition to my coursework, I have five years' worth of experience in the Marines working with aviation electronics in highly demanding work environments. While in the Marines my duties included:

- Supervising 40+ Marines while also mentoring lower ranking Marines
- Troubleshooting and diagnosing discrepancies in accordance with manufacturer publications
- Controlling the Avionics shop workflow by delegating work orders with respect to flight hours and other shops
- Inspecting aircraft repairs for “safe for flight” status and documenting the inspected repair work

The electronics lab component of my curriculum is also especially applicable since it required hands-on skills, planning, comprehension of results as well as troubleshooting skills and accurate documentation of recorded oscilloscope values, MATLAB data and graphs, as well as PSpice or LTSpice wiring diagrams and simulations.

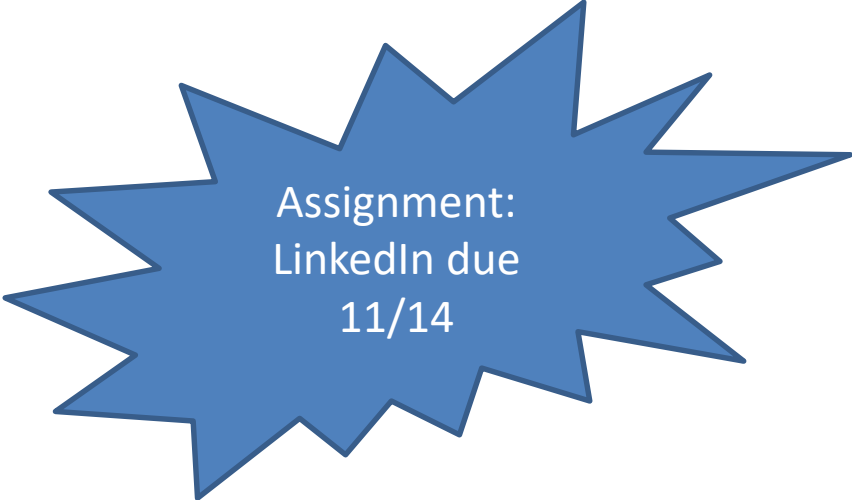
I am a fast learner, proficient in problem solving/troubleshooting, and driven in my work with a natural aptitude for hands on work. In regards to lab work, I especially enjoy testing and trying new ways to design circuits, or simply overcoming design challenges. Thank you for your time and consideration of my application. My resume is attached and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
John Doe

Next Class – 11/15

Student Panel & Cover Letter Review

- Bring 1 printed copy of your draft cover letter.
- Think of additional questions ask our student panelists.



Assignment:
LinkedIn due
11/14