Cover Letter Guide

Cover letters are simply marketing tools used to sell your skills, education, and how you can benefit the organization.

Salutation:
Try to identify the person who has the power to hire you in that department or organization. Spell their name and title correctly.

• Dear Ms. Smith
• Dear Marketing Director
• Dear Human Resources Professional

First Paragraph:
This should consist of why you are sending this letter and the position you are applying for, including the position number, if in the position announcement. This can also be a letter of inquiry asking about the possibility of an opening. In this paragraph you should also mention the person who referred you to this position or how you heard about this position.

Example 1
“I am writing in response to the opportunity of graphic design artist listed in the Albuquerque Journal on January 1, 2013.”

Example 2
“Dr. Faulkner in the English Department suggested I write to you about my approach to reporting campus news that I used effectively working for the daily newspaper at The University of New Mexico. She thought my experience and coursework could be relevant to your organization within the editor position that was listed on UNMjobs.com.”

Second Paragraph:
Communicate the way in which your skills and experience can be of value to the employer. Present the most relevant information you want the employer to consider, even before she/he turns to your resume. This is the paragraph to peak the employer’s curiosity. Highlight special accomplishments and show your enthusiasm for the organization’s mission, but don’t merely repeat your resume. Explain how your qualifications and the company’s needs are a good match.

Example 1
“For a recent University of New Mexico campus-wide event, I designed advertising materials which resulted in a 50 percent increase in student turnout over the previous year. Through this experience and an internship with a public relations firm, I have developed skills which may be of value in your promotional campaigns.”

Example 2
“You will note from the enclosed resume that many of my co-curricular and work experiences involve the organization and promotion of events. I have had direct sales experience soliciting potential customers for Canopy Caterers and have been successful in managing employees in various capacities. Perhaps the most challenging and rewarding experience I have had to date was working with Congresswoman Lana Lobo and the organizing committee of the New Mexico Literacy Fiesta. I am confident that I have the sales and management skills required to be a contributing member of XYZ organization.”

Third Paragraph:
Wrap it up and let the employer know that you appreciate their time. Let them know how to reach you.

“I look forward to discussing my experience in greater detail with you. Thank you very much for taking the time to consider my resume. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (phone number) or at (email address).”

Quick Tips:
• Your cover letter should be no longer than one page.
• Address your letter to a specific person if at all possible.
• Tailor your letter to the requirement of the position and the employer’s needs.
• Know your reader and his/her organization.
• Your letter should be easy to read and printed neatly.
• Have other people proofread your letter.
• Free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.
Lobo Louie  
601 Central Avenue  
Albuquerque, NM 87131  
August 20, 2013  

Mr. James E. Hire, Human Resources Manager  
The Right Company, Inc.  
1601 Sunset Boulevard  
San Diego, CA 92121  

Dear Mr. Hire:

I am writing to announce my interest in the regional sales position (080912) currently posted on your website. As a recent graduate of the University of New Mexico with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History, my education has been paired with my five years of retail sales experience; these skills would be beneficial to The Right Company, Inc.

I have five years of experience working with a variety of customers in a fast-paced retail environment. My product knowledge and excellent customer service skills resulted in more than a 75% increase in sales during the second quarter of 2013. In addition, I developed customer service skills through assisting students with resume writing while volunteering with UNM Career Services. Other volunteer experiences within the community have included active support of volunteer programs such as Hospice and Healthcare for the Homeless. Through research of your organization’s mission, I understand the importance of community involvement and look forward to helping the community within the San Diego area.

I look forward to discussing my qualifications and how I might help your organization accomplish its goals. If you need to reach me you may call 505-277-2531. Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Lobo Louie