

CHAPTER 27 - ASSIGNMENT 5

Cover Letter

Introduction: Writing a cover letter can seem like a difficult task. However, if you take it one step at a time, you'll soon be an expert at writing cover letters to send with your resume.

A cover letter typically accompanies each resume you send out. Your cover letter may make the difference between obtaining a job interview and having your resume ignored, so it makes good sense to devote the necessary time and effort to writing effective cover letters.

A cover letter should complement, not duplicate, your resume. Its purpose is to interpret the data-oriented, factual resume and add a personal touch. A cover letter is often your earliest written contact with a potential employer, creating a critical first impression.

Directions: Using Microsoft word, create a cover letter to accompany your resume.

How to organize a cover letter

Below is one possible way to arrange the content of your cover letter.

Opening Paragraph

State why you are writing.

Establish a point of contact (advertisement in a specific place for a specific position; a particular person's suggestion that you write): give some brief idea of who you are (a Senior engineering student at UW; a recent Ph.D. in History).

Paragraph(s) 2(-3)

Highlight a few of the most salient points from your enclosed resume.

Arouse your reader's curiosity by mentioning points that are likely to be important for the position you are seeking.

Show how your education and experience suit the requirements of the position, and, by elaborating on a few points from your resume, explain what you could contribute to the organization.

(Your letter should complement, not restate, your resume.)

Closing paragraph

Stress action. Politely request an interview at the employer's convenience.

Indicate what supplementary material is being sent under separate cover and offer to provide additional information (a portfolio, a writing sample, a sample publication, a dossier, an audition tape), and explain how it can be obtained.

Thank the reader for his/her consideration and indicate that you are looking forward to hearing from him/her.

Sample Cover Letter

September 12, 2003

Mr. Jake Warner
111 Glacier Avenue
Anytown, AK 99999

Dear Mr. Warner:

Mr. Bill Conners, my Work Based Learning coordinator at XYZ High School, told me that you have an opening for a student-learner at the front desk in your office. Please consider me for this position.

I have very good computer skills. I have taken Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Adobe PageMaker, all with a grade of A or B. During my junior year, I used these programs extensively as I worked on the school newspaper both as a reporter and as a layout person. My average typing speed is 50 wpm with one mistake and I am a very good proof-reader and editor. During my senior year, I hope to complete my courses in Microsoft Office and take the MOS certification test.

I have good customer service skills and would be able to greet your customers in person or on the phone and put them in contact with the staff person they need.

My resume is attached for you to look at. Please contact me so we can set up a time for an interview. I would enjoy working for your company.

Thank you.

Mary Smith
112233 Main Street
Anytown, AK 99999
907-555-9999

Student Name _____

Cover Letter Rubric

	Commendable 20-15	Acceptable 14-10	Not Acceptable 9-0	Score
Properly Addressed and Ended	Includes all proper information. Written to a specific person, ended note properly.	Includes sufficient proper information. Written to a specific person, ended note properly.	Lacks some proper information. Not written to a specific person, ended note wrong.	
First Paragraph	Includes all: stated reason for writing, named specific position, and mention how they heard of the opening. Original approach in opening.	Includes most: stated reason for writing, named specific position, and mention how they heard of the opening. Original approach in opening.	Most of this information is missing: stated reason for writing, named specific position, and mention how they heard of the opening. Original approach in opening.	
Second Paragraph	Thoroughly explained how they would be perfect for this position, did not repeat information on the resume, explained how they would benefit the employer.	Adequately explained how they would be perfect for this position, did not repeat information on the resume, explained how they would benefit the employer.	Minimally explained how they would be perfect for this position, did not repeat information on the resume, explained how they would benefit the employer.	
Third Paragraph	Includes all: desire to meet employer, flexibility in meeting with the employer, contact information, and their plan to follow up.	Includes most: desire to meet employer, flexibility in meeting with the employer, contact information, and their plan to follow up	Most of this information is missing: desire to meet employer, flexibility in meeting with the employer, contact information, and their plan to follow up	
Format and Conventions (technical writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation errors)	All formatting is consistent, readable, legible, and concurrent. No errors	Most formatting is consistent, readable, legible, and concurrent.	Not much formatting is consistent, readable, legible, and concurrent. One or more errors	
			Total Score	

Mastery	80-100
Acceptable	60-79
Not Acceptable	59 or less