

COVER LETTERS

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON CAREER CENTER | CAREERCENTER@COFC.EDU

You should always include a cover letter when mailing, emailing, or faxing a resume.

A cover letter serves two basic purposes: as an introduction and as a marketing tool. Your cover letter should describe specific reasons the employer should consider you as a viable candidate for a job opening. Those reasons may include your educational training, your work experience, and/or personal qualities and attributes.

- Address your letter to an identified person, as opposed to "To whom it may concern." (Call the organization and ask to whom your letter should be addressed). If you are responding to a "blind ad" (PO Box only), you may use "To whom it may concern" as the salutation.
- Tailor your letter to the position being filled or to the organization itself. This means that you will have to write a specific letter for each resume you mail. Generic cover letters have a very poor success rate because they are attributed to a lack of genuine interest on your part. You will be able to use essentially the same structure in most of your letters, but personalize each one and emphasize how your training and experience relates to that specific job.
- When printing hard copies, use good quality paper. The paper should match that of your resume. A cover letter should never be handwritten. Keep the cover letter to one page.
- The cover letter conveys a great deal about your writing skills. Use clear, concise language and proofread carefully! The letter should be free of any errors.

EMAILING A COVER LETTER

Your email cover letter will follow the same protocol as the print version. Here are more email specific tips for writing your electronic cover letter:

- Do not waste your subject line of the email. Never leave it blank. The purpose of this line is to attract the reader and prompt them to open your message. For example, reference the position title in the subject line.
- Be aware of any instructions provided within the job posting regarding email attachments. For security purposes, some businesses are not able to open emails with attachments. In these cases, type the cover letter within the body of the email. Keep in mind that text enhancements, such as bolding, bulleting, or underlining, may not transfer when an email is sent.
- When formatting your email cover letter, use left justification for your margins. Avoid indents and place a space between each paragraph. Avoid using emoticons, abbreviations, wild colors, and other distracting and unprofessional items.
- Be concise. Remember that reading email on the screen is often harder than reading printed communications.
- Don't forget to check your cover letter for spelling errors, style, and content before pressing the "send" button.

COVER LETTER OUTLINE

Include the same name and contact header as that used on your resume.

Date

(Space down four spaces)

Ms. Betty Wilson

Director of Recruiting

Jefferson Industries, Inc.

1234 Broad Parkway

Greenville, SC 29602

Dear Ms. Wilson:

The opening paragraph should state why you are writing and why you are interested in the organization. If you are writing a letter of application, you should name the position for which you are applying and tell the employer how you became aware of the position. A letter of inquiry should provide evidence of your career-mindedness; it helps to refer to specific job functions, if not the job title. If you were referred to the employer by another person, this is the best place to mention that person's name, and point out that he or she suggested you write.

The middle paragraph is where you highlight specific skills you possess that are relevant to the job or employer. This paragraph should strongly outline your strengths for the position and your motives for seeking employment with this organization. Remember to be concise and give specific examples of your skills. If you have qualifications noted on your resume, this is the opportunity to discuss how they relate to this particular position or employer, but do not just repeat information that is on your resume.

The closing paragraph states what you will do next (such as calling to arrange an interview at the employer's convenience), or what you would like the recipient of the letter to do next. An assertive statement explaining what you plan to do and what you hope the employer will do is harder to ignore than a vague request for consideration. Also, here is where you thank the employer for considering you for this position.

Sincerely,

(Space down four spaces and sign your name here)

Your Name Typed

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Name

Number | Email | Charleston, SC 29407

May 5, 2020

Mr. Kendall Smith
All for Democracy Organization
1 Columbia Avenue
North Charleston, SC 55565

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am writing to express my interest in a summer internship with All for Democracy Organization. Currently, I am a sophomore at the College of Charleston double majoring in Political Science and Business Administration. I would very much appreciate an opportunity to further my skills and knowledge in the non-profit sector. All for Democracy Organization has an excellent reputation for its work in promoting the voting process, and I am confident that my academic background, combined with my personal experience, will be beneficial to your work environment.

As a member of the Student Government Association (SGA) at the College of Charleston, I gained valuable experience working with people from diverse backgrounds. The SGA has also given me the opportunity to work in a political body on a small scale, learning the different processes in a government setting. These experiences will undoubtedly help me work well with your organization in promoting the voting process. In addition, my involvement with many extracurricular groups while maintaining high grades, has provided me with the confidence that I can handle multiple responsibilities and successfully meet deadlines.

My background and experience, combined with my eagerness to learn more about the non-profit sector, make me well-suited for an internship with your organization. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet you in person to discuss internship opportunities. Please feel free to call me at 555.555.1234 or email me at student@email.com.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Dawn Donaldson

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Name

Number | Email | Charleston, SC

1 Peachtree Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30051

July 15, 2020

Dear Hiring Manager,

It is with tremendous enthusiasm and confidence that I am writing you in reference to the Junior Publicist position with CNN Public Relations that you posted with the College of Charleston Career Center. I was pleased to learn about the digital and interactive publicity efforts that your company has taken on in the past few years. I have always admired the way CNN is constantly innovating and redefining traditional media outlets to reflect the ever-changing nature of the news media itself. In May 2020, I will graduate from the College of Charleston with Bachelor's degrees in both Communication and Spanish.

The atmosphere within the public relations department of CNN appears to be one characterized by resourceful pitching and strategic implementation to which I can contribute. Your need for excellent written and verbal communication skills is a great match to the talent I gained through my constant professional communication with various media groups while serving as a Public Relations Intern for the South Carolina Aquarium. My position as Public Relations Executive of College of Charleston's first annual Dance Marathon fundraiser proved my ability to generate substantial media coverage for a brand new effort, while building solid foundations for successful publicity of the event in the future.

I truly believe that a Junior Publicist position with CNN would be the perfect opportunity for me to invest my skills in a company for which I have incredible respect. Should you have any questions about my experience or qualifications, please do not hesitate to contact me at (555) 123-7896 or at alumni@college.edu. I appreciate your time in considering me for this position and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jessica Krasny