

## CORRESPONDENCE

### Cover Letter

The primary purpose of the cover letter is to acquaint the prospective employer with your unique talents and skills, and to arrange an interview to discuss employment possibilities. Because a resume is included with each cover letter, it is important that you do not duplicate what is said. The cover letter should highlight your resume by identifying how you are qualified for the position and the reasons why it will be to the employer's advantage to hire you. It is valuable to state the reasons for your interest in that particular employer.

The cover letter should be as brief as possible and should usually be limited to one page. If possible, the letter should not be directed to sir, madam, or director of personnel. Find out who is responsible for hiring and direct the letter to that individual. A description of the important elements to be included

in the cover letter follows, along with several examples of cover letters.

#### Guidelines for Cover Letters

1. Never mail a resume without a cover letter.
2. Address by name and title of the individual with the power to hire you, if at all possible.
3. Plan your letter before you write it.
4. Adapt the letter carefully to conditions of the job opportunity.
5. Open with an idea that captures the attention of the prospective employer so that the letter and resume are considered worth reading.
6. Highlight and draw attention to the points in your resume that uniquely qualify you for the position.
7. If you are unsure what jobs are available, include one or more questions in the cover letter that require a response-this precludes a form letter reply.
8. Close your letter with a request for an interview.
9. Avoid jargon and trite language.
10. Use good quality stationery and have the letter typed in a professional manner-never use form letters.
11. Finally, special attention should be given to grammar, spelling, and neatness. The cover letter should represent your very best efforts. It may be beneficial to have a friend, relative, or member of the Career Services staff review your letter prior to sending it to an employer.

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## Thank You Letter

After you have had a campus or site interview, sending a thank you letter is a simple matter of courtesy.

1. As soon after the interview as possible, a letter should be sent to

express your appreciation for the opportunity to present yourself.

2. Use the letter to express your continued interest in the position and company. Some details of things which impressed you are a nice way to per-

sonalize your letter and convey your interest more convincingly.

3. Supply any additional information that was requested at the time of the visit or interview.

## Other Types of Letters

### Letter of Acknowledgement

When an offer is received, special attention should be given to the preparation of your response letter.

1. Upon receipt of an offer, prompt acknowledgement should be transmitted to the prospective employer.
2. Express your appreciation for the offer.
3. Notify the company of the date you expect to make your decision or that you will respond within their time limitations.

When a rejection is received, special consideration should be given to your response. Don't take this rejection letter as a definite NO! A demonstrated interest in the company and respectful letter may lead to further consideration for other positions as they become available.

1. Acknowledge receipt of the letter.
2. Thank the interviewer for considering your application, indicate that you are still interested in a position with the company, and give some specific information to illustrate what you like about the company, position, or both.

### Letter Seeking Additional Information

1. Indicate interest in the company and its offer.
2. Ask for the information which you need to be more informed. Remember to be as specific as possible!
3. Express your appreciation for the cooperation that you receive.

### Acceptance Letter of Second Interview or of Job Offer

Be businesslike but also tailor your letter to the specific employer, so you look sincere and genuinely interested in the company and job. Never copy example letters.

1. Write to the person who wrote and/or interviewed you.
2. Thank the person and/or show your enthusiasm for the offer.
3. State what you are accepting.
4. Concisely, yet descriptively, give some details about what has impressed you about the company and/or interview.

See sample at the end of this section.

### Rejection Letter

It is courteous to turn down a plant trip or job offer graciously.

1. Write to the person who wrote you.
2. Thank her/him for the offer.
3. Briefly state that you are declining and why (don't get too personal).

NEVER copy sample letters, inserting details. If companies get identical letters, they may question who is doing the writing and your sincerity.

See sample at the end of this section.

## Sample Cover Letters

905 Woodlawn Drive  
Clifton Park, NJ 07306  
Date

Maria Porter, Account Executive  
Eliot, Zizelman, & Rohn  
5962 Martindale Road  
Parsippany, NJ 08630

Dear Ms. Porter:

To succeed in advertising, one must possess a flair for creativity, the ability to work effectively with clients and associates, initiative, and perseverance. Through this letter I would like to demonstrate such qualities and express an interest in an account services position with Eliot, Zizelman, & Rohn.

I have enclosed a resume for your review, which outlines my experience in the field of advertising and promotion. As an advertising salesperson for the Daily Collegian, I worked successfully with a variety of clients and with the media in designing and arranging advertisements. My responsibilities in this position enhanced my skills in writing, design, promotion, marketing, and follow-through. I quickly learned to identify appropriate markets and to promote the Daily Collegian as an effective medium to reach those markets. Much of my success is due to my customer orientation, my skills in identifying client needs, and in marketing the services of my employer. I am a self-starter, persistent, and possess the ability to learn quickly. I feel these skills and experiences would be a strong addition to your firm and am excited about the prospect of putting them to work for you.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss at length my background and qualifications and how they can be of benefit to your firm. I will contact you within the next two weeks to arrange a suitable meeting time. I am looking forward to speaking with you.

Best Regards,

Mark E. University

Enclosure

Your present address  
City, State, ZIP  
Date

Person's Name  
Title  
Company  
Address

Dear Ms. Jones:

**FIRST PARAGRAPH:**

Attract the employer's interest by briefly mentioning such information as a relevant accomplishment or your enthusiasm for the job. Avoid such stereotypical, overused first sentences as "This is in answer to your advertisement," or "I am a senior in Social Work at Penn State." You do want to state who you are and the purpose of the letter, but take some time and think of an interesting, thought-provoking, or eye-catching introductory paragraph.

**MIDDLE PARAGRAPH:**

Describe your interest in the position, in the field of work, or in the organization. If you have work experience, be sure to mention pertinent data or accomplishments to show that you have specific qualifications or skills for this particular type of work. Refer to key aspects of the resume which relate to the job or employer, but don't restate complete sections of the resume.

**CLOSING PARAGRAPH:**

Mention your interest in discussing the job in person and give dates when you are available. Ending the letter with a question may encourage a more prompt reply.

Sincerely,

(handwritten signature)

Your typed name

10 Haller Hall  
 University Park, PA 16802  
 (814) 865-0000  
 Date

Jim Spray  
 Allied Bendix Air Transport  
 Avionics Division  
 Box 9327  
 Fort Lauderdale, TX 33310

Dear Mr. Spray:

After reading your brochure and researching Allied Bendix Air Transport, I became quite interested in possible summer employment there. I've read that you have a summer program and am very interested in avionics products. Also, since I am graduating in December, I would appreciate being considered for a permanent position as well.

I have a large quantity of experience involving several programming languages as well as many computers. I've worked on many operating systems including 2.9, 4.1 & 4.2 BSD UNIX, WindowsNT, VM/CMS, PC/IX, and MS-DOS. I've gained experience from both class work and employment (as stated on the enclosed resume). I have experience as a system programmer and operator on both Vax 11/780 and Vax 11/750, but could easily and quickly learn to program or operate a different computer.

Proved by my many activities, I have lots of energy to exert in work. I am an enthusiastic hard worker with the desire to learn many new concepts and skills. I would enjoy having Allied Bendix Air Transport utilize this energy. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time.

Cordially,  
 Mary E. Smith

Enclosure

Comments: Note that this candidate refers to the research she's done on the company and expresses a sincere interest. She also points out the amount and types of her relevant experiences in the field.

4111 Merchantile Drive  
 Your City, PA 16111  
 (000) 237-0000  
 Date

Margaret W. Willis  
 Director  
 Peach Tree Day Care Center  
 7120 Greenwood Ave.  
 Beltsville, MD 21000

Dear Dr. Willis:

Having worked in three day care centers as a volunteer and student intern, I was quite excited to learn from Professor Jan Jenkins that you have an opening for a teacher at Peach Tree Day Care Center. I would very much like to be considered for that position and feel qualified for several reasons.

According to Dr. Jenkins, you are interested in incorporating educational objectives into play programs. I am not only committed to such an approach but, as my enclosed resume illustrates, I have had the opportunity to design and implement such programs at two different day care facilities. Children, teachers and parents were all enthusiastic about how educational yet captivating these sessions turned out to be, and I thoroughly enjoyed both planning them and working with the children.

I was also informed that Peach Tree Day Care Center is heavily used by African-American and Hispanic families and that you strive to meet their unique needs. In addition to studying the culture of urban minorities, for the past two summers I have also been a "Big Sister" for two African-American children, ages 4 and 6, living in Philadelphia.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these and other experiences with you and to find out more about Peach Tree. Spring break lasts from March x through the x. Would it be possible to meet with you some time then?

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,  
 Michele Nitiyany

Enclosure

Comments: This candidate has been able to learn about the position and is very effective at relating specific details about her accomplishments and skills to the particular employer's needs.

## Other Sample Letters

1234 E. College Ave.  
State College, PA 16801  
Date

William Johnson  
LMO Pharmaceutical Company  
9183 Short Hills Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with you on Friday, October 23, 20XX here at Penn State. The Account Representative position we discussed is a wonderful opportunity for which I feel uniquely qualified.

As we discussed, my background in both the sciences and business will enable me to interact effectively with physicians and pharmacists. Not only am I able to discuss the technical aspects of your products, I understand marketing techniques and the importance of the bottom line.

If you need any additional information from me, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or e-mail. Again, thank you for meeting with me. I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Student

1000 S. Atherton St.  
State College, PA 16801  
Date

Harold Sherman  
XYZ Corporation  
678 5th Avenue  
Albany, NY 12205

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Thank you for your recent offer of employment as a management trainee with XYZ Corporation. I am quite pleased to accept this offer. The position sounds quite challenging, particularly the 12 month rotation among your regional plants. I am looking forward to this challenge and believe I will be successful at meeting it.

I understand that your offer involves a starting date of June 6, 20xx. I also understand that the salary offered is \$4x,000, plus benefits discussed at my most recent interview. I will contact you within the next several weeks to discuss travel and moving details as you requested.

Once again, thank you for your offer. I am excited about becoming part of the XYZ Corporation team.

Sincerely,

Jane C. Doe