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Cover Letter Quick Guide

Cover Letter Writing

Cover Letters also known as Letters of Interest, can play a pivotal role in a successful job search by highlighting your relevant knowledge, skills, abilities and professional experiences to demonstrate your fit for a specific position, company, or industry. The way the letter is written also gives insight to a hiring manager about your personality. Therefore, tailoring your cover letter to meet the requirements of each position you apply for is essential.

Although some applications may not specifically ask for a cover letter, submitting a tailored one enables a candidate to:

- Provide a personal introduction and concise statement of interest in the position.
- Highlight written and verbal communication skills.
- Offer information about experiences and /or skills that are relevant to the position.
- Differentiate oneself from other candidates by making distinctions in skills and abilities being offered.
- Show and tell what research you have done on the company.
- Provides a space for you to state information that normally would not be appropriate to add to your resume such as:
 - *Relocation desires/details*
 - *Salary history of requirements (only if asked)*
 - *Revealing how you learned of the position, especially if it was an in-house referral*
 - *Details about an employment gap*
 - *Description of older, but relevant background information that cannot fit on your resume*

Cover Letter Basics:

- A cover letter should be 1-page (*about 3-4 paragraphs long), easy to read, using a clear professional font style such as Arial, Tahoma, Calibri, Verdana, or Times New Roman. Font size should be in the range of 10-12 point).
- Always add the date you send the letter.
- Make certain the contact information on both your resume and cover letter matches.
- List the company name and mailing address whenever possible.
- Address the cover letter to the hiring manager by name whenever possible. If the contact person is unknown, use a general salutation. For example, "Dear Hiring Team," "Dear HR," or "Dear Reviewer". Avoid using older greetings such as "Dear Sir or Madam," or "To Whom It May Concern."
- Ensure formatting (font and font size) is consistent throughout.
- As always, do not just rely on spell check. **PROOFREAD** for spelling and grammar.
- The cover letter should essentially have 3-parts:
 - **An Opening paragraph** to state the name of the position and company, perhaps a referral source, and discuss your interest in the position.
 - **A Job-Matching paragraph** may be 1-2 paragraphs long and should indicate how you fit or match the job requirements. Hint: Use the job description as a guide.
 - **A Closing paragraph** is an opportunity for you to recap or reemphasize a high point as well as indicate your desire to interview. It is also meant to be a space for you to express your gratitude for being considered and to provide your contact information.

WRITING THE COVER LETTER

The Traditional Cover Letter includes the following:

The **Heading** consists of your contact information, the date you are sending your cover letter, and the company name along with the name of the recipient of your letter.

***WITH NAME OF RECIPIENT AND COMPANY**

Paul Richter
555 Lanbury Lane
Solon, Ohio 44139
(440) 555-5555 (mobile)
p_richter201@outlook.com

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Mr. Mark James
Customer Service Department Manager
ABC Company
55 Transportation Boulevard
Garfield Heights, Ohio 44125

***NAME OF RECIPIENT UNKNOWN**

Paul Richter
555 Lanbury Lane
Solon, Ohio 44139
(440) 555-5555 (mobile)
p_richter201@outlook.com

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

ABC Company
55 Transportation Boulevard
Garfield Heights, Ohio 44125

The **Opening Paragraph** is a personal introduction and statement of interest in the position. Provide specific and meaningful reasons for submitting a resume/application along with how and why you are a great fit.

***WITH NAME OF RECIPIENT**

Dear Mr. Mark James:

It is with great pleasure that I am submitting this cover letter and resume as application to the opening you have for a Customer Service Representative, at ABC Company, as posted on your company website. I believe that my combined academic background and 5 years of professional experiences in customer service roles makes me an ideal candidate for this position.

***WITHOUT NAME OF RECIPIENT**

Dear Hiring Manager:

It is with great pleasure that I am submitting this cover letter and resume as application to the opening you have for a Customer Service Representative, at ABC Company, as posted on your company website. I believe that my combined academic background and 5 years of professional experiences in customer service roles makes me an ideal candidate for this position.

The **Job-Matching paragraph(s)** (the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs), provides space and opportunity for you to highlight skills that are a match to the position. These skills should be gained from past work, volunteer, extracurricular, or academic experiences. However, you do want to be sure that you identify the competencies that the position requires and provide examples of how you meet those competencies in this area of your cover letter.

***WITHOUT BULLET POINTS**

At XYZ Company, I was the first point of contact for customers, account managers, and service technicians and provided general information as needed. This role required that I be detailed-oriented, effective at multi-tasking and possess superior communication skills. I developed a process improvement system to assist in prioritizing and addressing customer requests which led to an increase of sales orders and training of other customer service assistants, system-wide.

In addition, I have an ability to quickly learn products and apply related knowledge to internal and external customers. My office experience includes basic to intermediate skill proficiency with Microsoft Office and familiarity with data entry and maintenance of customer account information. At ABC Company, I was frequently asked to assist new account assistants with product information, processing incoming calls, and processing service technician calls.

***WITH BULLET POINTS**

- Experienced being the first point of contact for customers, account managers, and service technicians to provide general information.
- Very detailed-oriented, effective at multi-tasking, with superior communication.
- Well-developed process improvement skills that help improve organization and efficiency of tasks.
- Strong communication skills that help understand and address customer requests, leading to increase in sales orders.
- Ability to quickly learn and apply related knowledge to get tasks completed.
- Basic to intermediate skill proficiency with Microsoft Office and familiarity with data entry and maintenance of customer account information.
- Skilled at using multi-line phone systems and processing incoming calls.

The **Closing Paragraph** concludes your cover letter. Here you thank the reader for review of your application and indicate your interest in interviewing to further to discuss the position, your qualifications, and to learn more about the company. You could reference how you can be reached if not noted in your heading, as well as the best time you can be reached. The most common closing salutation is “**Sincerely**,” followed by a signature and full name.

***COMMON EXAMPLE**

I am very interested in pursuing the Customer Service Representative position at ABC Company. I am available for more detailed discussion about my background.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my resume and application and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Nancy Smith

Nancy Smith

***TRENDY EXAMPLE**

It is my hope that after reviewing my cover letter and resume, you feel that I am the ideal candidate for the position of Customer Service Representative at ABC Company.

I welcome the opportunity to interview to discuss more about how I could add value to the position and the company.

I welcome you to view my professional profile at www.linkedin.com/Nancy-Smith.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Nancy Smith

Nancy Smith

The T-LETTER Cover Letter includes the following:

The same format for your **Heading** and **Closing**, but a different set-up for **Job-Matching**.

The **Heading** consists of your contact information, the date you are sending your cover letter, and the company name along with the name of the recipient of your letter.

***WITH NAME OF RECIPIENT AND COMPANY**

Paul Richter
555 Lanbury Lane
Solon, Ohio 44139
(440) 555-5555 (mobile)
p_richter201@outlook.com

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Mr. Mark James
Customer Service Department Manager
ABC Company
55 Transportation Boulevard
Garfield Heights, Ohio 44125

The **Opening Paragraph** is a personal introduction and statement of interest in the position. Provide specific and meaningful reasons for submitting a resume/application along with how and why you are a great fit.

***WITH NAME OF RECIPIENT**

Dear Mr. Mark James:

It is with great pleasure that I am submitting this cover letter and resume as application to the opening you have for a Customer Service Representative, at ABC Company, as posted on your company website. I believe that my combined academic background and 5 years of professional experiences in customer service roles makes me an ideal candidate for this position.

The **Job-Matching paragraph(s)** (made up of two-columns), provides space and opportunity for you to highlight skills, experience, and education that you have that are also a match to the position requirements.

***TWO-COLUMNS**

YOU REQUIRE:

- Bachelor's Degree in Business or Finance
- Ability to represent the products that ABC corporation manufactures, specifically in the paint industry
- Knowledge of the details regarding specifications and measurement for paint projects
- Cost estimating and problem-solving
- Strong communication skills, both verbally and written to complete orders accurately

I OFFER:

- Bachelor's degree in business with a concentration in Finance.
- Experience at Home Depot in the Paint Department representing and selling various paints and related products for over five years.
- Detail-oriented and responsible for properly advising customers about the specifications and number of gallons of paint needed for specific projects.
- Figured cost of projects and assisting with solving problems before they arise.
- Successfully communicated with customers before completing sales transactions.

COVER LETTER EXAMPLES:

**Traditional with Bullet Points*

NANCY SMITH

123 Example Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44106 • (555) 555-5555 • nancy.smith@gmail.com

123 Company
32 Some Street
Cleveland, OH 44106

Dear Hiring Manager:

Please accept this cover letter and resume as application to the Customer Service Representative position with the 123 Company. I possess a Bachelor's degree in customer service and 7 years of extensive experience in the field. Due to my enthusiasm and commitment in the customer service field, I believe that I can become an essential member of your team.

Based on my understanding of your Customer Service Representative position and your company, here are the highlights of my qualifications and background that seem most relevant in meeting your needs:

- Highly skilled in listening and responding to customers' needs and concerns
- Demonstrated ability to provide information regarding products and services
- In-depth knowledge of taking orders, determining charges, and overseeing billing/payments
- Track record of reviewing and making changes to customer accounts
- Proven record of handling returns or complaints efficiently
- Able to record details of customer contacts and actions taken
- Comprehensive knowledge of researching answers and finding simple solutions

Furthermore, I have a professional demeanor, good communication and negotiation skills. My enclosed resume gives complete details about my qualifications and capabilities.

It is my hope that you would allow me the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications and skills in detail during an interview. I can be reached as noted above.

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

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Nancy Smith

***T-Letter**

Nancy Smith
123 Example Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

ABC Paint Company
1234 Color Circle
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
Attention: Mrs. Anne Beal

Dear Mrs. Beal:

While reviewing the job description for the position of **Sales Manager** for **ABC Paint Company**, I quickly became aware of how my skills match and in some areas exceed the requirements you are seeking. You will see in this letter and in my resume, how much my qualifications are a good fit for your company's needs.

YOU REQUIRE:

- Bachelor's Degree in Business or Finance
- Ability to represent the products that ABC corporation manufactures, specifically in the paint industry
- Knowledge of the details regarding specifications and measurement for paint projects.
- Cost estimating and problem-solving
- Strong communication skills, both verbally and written to complete orders accurately

I OFFER:

- Bachelor's degree in business with a concentration in Finance
- Experience at Home Depot Paint Department representing and selling various paints and related products for over five years.
- Detail-oriented and responsible for properly advising customers about the specifications and number of gallons of paint needed for given project.
- Figured cost of project and assisted with solving problems before they arose.
- Successfully communicated with customers and completed sales and transactions with precision.

In addition, with a strong sense of color coordination, I have the skills that will be beneficial as customers plan and design their paint projects. I look forward to having an opportunity to interview and learn more about the positions and company as well as I how could add value to your existing team at **ABC Company**.

You may contact me at (555) 555-5555 or nancy.smith@gmail.com anytime.

Sincerely,

Nancy Smith

***Follow-Up - Thank You Letter or Card**

Beyond the initial cover letters that indicate interest in a position, another important step in the job search process is imperative upon completion of an interview. It is proper etiquette for jobseekers to follow-up with a **Thank You Letter or Card**. It is a good idea to send it immediately after an interview.

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Building Supply Company
2350 E. Main Street
Maple Heights, Ohio 44137

Dear Mr. Carpenter:

Thank you so very much for the opportunity to speak with you yesterday afternoon regarding the position of Construction Manager. The position as we discussed remains of great interest to me and I look forward to hearing back from you regarding my candidacy.

As a reminder, I have over 10-years of experience in the building trade. In addition, I have supervised a crew of 15 along with assuming business office management responsibilities. In this capacity, I have successfully contributed to the building of the Art Avenue student building at Cleveland State University in Cleveland, Ohio. While doing so, I managed to keep the project on-time and under cost while making certain that the utmost quality materials and labor production was available.

Once more, I am very excited about this opportunity and am eager to get started with the team on your next project. Please remember that you can contact me any time of day at nedcarpenterworks@yahoo.com or (440) 123-4567.

Sincerely,

Ned Carpenter

Ned Carpenter

***Resurrection Letter after notice that another candidate was chosen**

Have you done all you can in your job search and made it to the final round yet have not heard anything further or learned that someone else has been offered the job? Consider sending out a **Resurrection Letter**. It cannot hurt, and it could result in further consideration for the next opening or the same position, if the chosen candidate does not work out.

Advanced Sanitation Company
4343 Lake Road
Ashtabula, OH 44005

Dear Ms. Cleary:

Thank you for the correspondence letting me know the difficulty you had in making your decision in the final round of candidates for the Sanitation II position. I sincerely extend best wishes as your project moves along.

It was a great honor to have been in the running for this position and to have made it to the final three candidates. I see that Advanced Sanitation Company is slated for continued growth and demand as projects gear up in the Ashtabula area.

Please know that I remain strongly interested in working for your company and hope that I will be considered as new openings occur. I am very enthused about the projects' success as I know how much it will benefit the area. I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Sincerely,

Adam Sands

Adam Sands

***Resurrection Letter after an interview with no further communication**

Have you done all you can in your job search and made it to the final round yet have not heard anything further or learned that someone else has been offered the job? Consider sending out a **Resurrection Letter**. It cannot hurt, and it could result in further consideration for the next opening or the same position, if the chosen candidate does not work out.

Advanced Sanitation Company
4343 Lake Road
Ashtabula, OH 44005

Tuesday, May 1, 2018

Dear Ms. Cleary:

I want to thank you and your team again for interviewing me for the Sanitation II position with Advanced Sanitation Company on Tuesday, April 10, 2018. I have yet to hear that the position has been filled, therefore remain very interested in filling it.

It has been a great honor and challenge to have been in the running for this position and to have made it to the final three candidates.

Again, please know that I remain interested in working for your company and hope that I am the successful candidate.

I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Sincerely,

Adam Sands

Adam Sands



To schedule an appointment or to learn more about the services we provide, please contact us:

Call: **216-475-2225** or
Visit us online: ***cuyahogaworks.org***