



## Cover Letters

There are different types of cover letters. A “letter of inquiry” is written to inquire about opportunities or request general information about a company. A “letter of application” is written to apply for a specific position within a company. Regardless of type, these general guidelines can help make your cover letter effective:

### General guidelines

- Use block business letter format (see examples on back).
- Address each letter to a specific person. Avoid “To Whom It May Concern” or “Dear Sir or Madam” unless after calling you still can’t learn who will read your letter.
- Individualize the letter by incorporating information you have acquired through researching the company; don’t use a form letter.
- Proofread your letter to ensure it is error-free.
- Print the letter on high-quality paper that matches your resume.

When you apply for a position, your cover letter is your chance to convince an employer to read your resume. It allows you to express your interest and enthusiasm in the position and the possibility of working for the organization. It also:

- Allows you to highlight skills or experiences that are especially relevant to the position.
- Demonstrates your written communication skills.
- Strengthens your chances of securing an interview.

### Parts of a cover letter

This simple outline can help you write winning cover letters every time! For examples, see the back of this page.

#### Top of page

- Include your return address.
- You may also include your phone number and email address.
- Below your contact information, type the current date.

#### Introductory paragraph

- Briefly state who you are and why you’re writing.
- Mention the specific job title and how you heard about the opening.
- If you have a personal connection to the organization mention that person’s name.
- Mention something you know or respect about the organization.

#### Body paragraph

- State how your skills, education, or experience match the requirements of the position.
- Use specific examples and short stories to provide additional detail about one or two experiences that provide evidence of relevant skills, strengths, and accomplishments, without repeating your resume verbatim.
- Mention how the experiences you wrote about will let you do something specific for the employer.

#### Closing paragraph

- Indicate what actions you would like to have happen next. Ask for an interview; state that you will follow up in one week.
- Refer to the enclosed resume and provide your phone number and email address to make it easy for them to contact you.
- Express your appreciation for the employer’s time and consideration.
- Be sure to sign your letter!

#### Next step

- Follow up by contacting the organization within 2-3 weeks. You can confirm that they received your materials, and they will be reminded of your interest.

#### If You Are Submitting Your Application Electronically...

Unless otherwise specified by the employer, paste the text of your cover letter into an email. Include the name of the position in the subject line. You don't need to date your email. Instead of placing your contact information at the top, place it under your typed signature, as follows:

Sincerely,  
Morgan Maxwell

626 East Second Street  
Bloomington, IN 47404  
(812) 555-6473

Also attach your formatted resume and cover letter—preferably as PDF files—using your name as part of the filenames. Mention in your cover letter that your resume is attached.

626 East Second Street  
Bloomington, IN 47404

April 16, 2008

Hillary Hirer  
Director of Human Resources  
Acme Public Relations  
1 Paycheck Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60111

Dear Ms. Hirer:

I am writing to apply for the position of Marketing and Special Events Coordinator. I became aware of the position while exploring job listings on IUCareers.com. Acme is a leader in working with the government and non-profits, which is why I am particularly interested in your company.

At ESPN Television, I had the opportunity to work with a wide variety of people as a media relations intern. I coordinated press conferences and interviews with athletic teams and assisted with daily events and shows for ESPN broadcasts. These tasks required a high level of verbal communication skills, attention to detail, and the ability to interact with a diverse range of people. Through the Semester at Sea Program, I had the opportunity to live, study, and work in different cultures. I believe my experience meets the position requirement that an individual be comfortable with a wide range of audiences.

The public relations sector requires strong leadership skills. As the Student Director for the campus tour guide team, I was responsible for coordinating over 25 tours weekly and for facilitating meetings for 65 student tour guides. This experience enhanced my leadership and motivational abilities. In addition, membership in the Alpha Alpha Alpha Sorority provided many opportunities to gain valuable leadership skills.

I believe my education, work experience, and leadership abilities make me a strong candidate for the Marketing and Special Events Coordinator position. Enclosed is my resume that further outlines my education and work experience. I am excited to learn more about Acme Public Relations and look forward to the opportunity to discuss this position with you in person. Should you have any questions, please call me at 812-555-9876. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

*Morgan Maxwell*

Morgan Maxwell

Enclosure

122 Sports Drive, Apt. 301  
Bloomington, IN 47408

April 7, 2008

Sheila Burnett  
Director, Human Resources  
Ads4You, Inc.  
2 Billboard Way  
New York, NY 10022

Dear Ms. Burnett:

As a recent graduate of Indiana University who is passionate about the discipline of psychographics, I am writing to apply for the Account Planner position at Ads4You, Inc. I learned about this position from my uncle Robert Branciforte, who is an alumnus of Indiana University and a golf partner of Ads4You's Senior Vice President Daniel Langston. Your company is widely known for its innovations in psychographic research that go far beyond the British advertising firms that pioneered this approach, and I would be thrilled to be involved in this cutting-edge work.

My internship last summer at Nationwide Advertising, Inc. offered a wide-ranging introduction to account planning and included an intensive research project involving the compilation and analysis of psychographic and geodemographic data on consumers in the Ohio River Valley region. Upon completion of this project, I was awarded Nationwide's "Summer Research Intern Award." I believe that my research and analytical skills, coupled with my strong work ethic and team orientation, would be an excellent match for this position.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this position and how I might be of service to Ads4You. I am enclosing my résumé, which offers additional details about my education and experience. I will follow up with you within the next two weeks to ensure the arrival of these materials and to inquire about scheduling an interview. Should you wish to contact me before that time, please call (812) 555-4321 or email [bjones@indiana.edu](mailto:bjones@indiana.edu). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

*Jordan Jones*

Jordan Jones

Enclosure