



# CAREER SERVICES

# COVER LETTER GUIDE

Career Services  
Goodwin University  
One Riverside Drive  
East Hartford, CT 06118

## KEY POINTERS REGARDING COVER LETTERS

### Why a cover letter?

The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce you, support your résumé and to emphasize the skills and experience you have that are most relevant to the position you are seeking. A cover letter is effective when written for a specific employer and a specific job opening. Researching the employer allows you to personalize the letter and make connections between the job opening and your qualifications.

NEVER send a résumé without a cover letter unless the employer specifically requests that you don't send a cover letter. Please remember if you are asked to include a cover letter, send it; if nothing is stated, send it.

The main purpose of the cover letter is to encourage the employer to spend a bit more time re-reading your résumé and contacting you. The cover letter is the “hook” to strengthen your opportunity for the interview. Remember, this is an opportunity for you to impress an employer with your writing skills, qualifications and enthusiasm, while at the same time exhibiting your sincerity, personality and style -- all important elements in the hiring decision.

### What are some general guidelines for effective cover letter writing?

1. Generally the letter is no more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a page and is three or four paragraphs with the first paragraph introducing you and the position of interest (2-3 sentences), the second paragraph going into depth related to the position description (5-6 sentences) and the third paragraph contains the “closing and thanking” sentences (3 sentences);
2. Be addressed to a specific person (if at all possible) with the person’s job title; make certain that you correctly spell the person’s name;
3. Conform to **standard business style** and be **error free**;
4. Refer to your résumé without repeating what is obvious (as the information is contained in your résumé) and highlight your abilities related to the job description with a level of depth;

Remember, the cover letter compels the employer to read beyond the first paragraph and encourages the reader to refer back to your résumé and ultimately contact you for the first interview (telephone screening or in-person for example).

## TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COVER LETTERS

Your cover letter is the best way to sell yourself and encourages the employer to want to read your résumé. It allows your personality to come through and identifies to the employer the benefits of hiring you. It will always accompany your résumé and application.

### Follow these tips for writing effective cover letters:

1. **Always include pertinent information**

Your name, address, email and telephone number (including the area code) should be easily visible on every cover letter you submit. If you are represented on LinkedIn, that address would be included.

2. **Make it personal**

Address your letter to a specific person within the company. If possible, call for a contact name. “To whom it may concern” and “Dear Sir/Madam” letters are more likely to be ignored than those addressed to a specific person (and probably better not to use those salutations). If you cannot obtain the name of the contact person, the letter may be addressed to: Hiring Manager, Recruiter, Talent Manager or Human Resources Representative.

3. **The opening sentence or paragraph should be meaningful and tailored to the position specifics**

When employers read letters, they scan for content. Attention-grabbing first sentences or paragraphs (describing why you’re the best person for the job, or addressing the employer’s needs) may more likely persuade the reader to continue reading.

4. **Each cover letter is unique**

There’s no “one size fits all” cover letter. Each position and company/organization for which you apply is different. Express interest and knowledge about the specific organization, its products and/or services.

5. **Describe your skills as they relate to the job**

Relate your experience, training and accomplishments to show that you have the skills to successfully perform the job.

6. **Always, always proofread your cover letter prior to sending the letter to employers**

Cover letters **must** be professional; mistakes are unacceptable.

7. **Be brief and use action words to describe your accomplishments.**

8. **Always keep a copy of every cover letter you send.**

Maintaining copies of prior letters you have sent will make your job search and follow-up much easier.

Be sure to review your résumé, cover letter and any other documents that may be uploaded prior to sending your application.

## General Outline for a Cover Letter

129 Riverside Drive  
Any town, CT 00000

Date

Barbara Hidalgo,  
Vice President  
XYZ Company 1234 First Avenue  
Anytown, CT 12345

**(Use complete title and address)**

Dear Ms. Hidalgo:

**(Address it to a particular person)**

**OPENING PARAGRAPH:** Two to three sentences  
State why you are writing, name the position or  
type of work for which you are applying.

**(Goal: To Make the addressee want to read  
or re-read your résumé.)**

**MIDDLE PARAGRAPH:** Approximately five to six  
Sentences. Explain why you are interested in  
working for this employer (mention some fact you  
uncovered in your research) and specify your reasons for your interest in this type of work. If you have had related work  
experience or education, be sure to point it out. **However, do not simply reiterate the information on your résumé,  
elaborate. If you are responding to a position opening, use key words found in the description.** Emphasize skills or  
abilities you have that relate to the job for which you are applying (give examples!). Convince the employer that you have  
the personal qualities and motivation to perform well.

**(Remember to focus on job description)  
(Remember your résumé contains details)**

**CLOSING PARAGRAPH:**

**(Do not be passive--Statement of action)**

Two to Three sentences. Write a closing to pave the way for the interview by indicating the action you that you are hoping  
for, your goal: to discuss the position further -- an interview. Always thank the individual for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Name

Email

Phone

# What to Include in Your Cover Letter

## Components of a Cover Letter

A cover letter is comprised of several components: contact information, the body of the cover letter and an appropriate closing.

## Personalize your Cover Letter

It is going to be time consuming to write a custom cover letter for each job you apply for, however, it is important to take the time and effort to show the company why you are a strong match.

When it comes to cover letters, taking the time to get personal is really important. Find out as much as you can about the company and the hiring manager. Personalize your cover letter and, if you can, address it to the individual responsible for hiring. If need be, research online or call to find out the name of the hiring manager, explaining that you are looking to address your letter to a specific individual and that you appreciate her/his assistance.

## To whom should I address the cover letter?

:

- Best: a particular individual-her/his name
- Dear Hiring Manager
- Dear Human Resources Representative
- Dear Recruiter

## How should I close the letter?

It is important to close your letter in a professional manner and examples include:

- Sincerely
- Regards
- Best Regards
- Yours truly
- Respectfully

Follow the closing with a comma, a space, and then your name and your contact information. For example, if you are sending an email message:

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your email address

Your phone number

## Tips:

Always follow the instructions from the employer for submitting your application materials. If you are asked to email your résumé, cover letter, and list of recommendations: the résumé, cover letter and recommendations or listing of references with individual's position, professional address and possibly "how the individual knows you and duration." (if asked) should be uploaded or forwarded as attachments. Then, with a very brief email note the position of interest and that "all appropriate information is attached." If you are uploading information to an electronic application (Applicant Tracking System), carefully follow all instructions.

# Sample Cover Letter

Your Address  
Address

Date

Maria Depal  
Human Resources Representative  
Westchester Ophthalmology Practice  
4035 Meriden Avenue  
Meriden, CT

Dear Ms. Depal:

I'm very interested in the position of Ophthalmic Technician with the Westchester Ophthalmology Practice. (Note a point of interest to your particular field.>>) My experiences during my internship have helped me to grasp a practical understanding of the day-to-day activities of a busy ophthalmic practice. I understand the importance of obtaining key credentials and I became ABO and NCLE certified in December 2018.

My Associate's Degree from Goodwin University has provided me with a strong familiarity of key skills, latest medical technology and values emphasizing compassionate care and overall service excellence. During my training, I gained a variety of skills while developing the capability to think creatively and adapt to organization needs. (Note Some Technical or Program Specifics. >>) Background training enabled me to become familiar with fabrication of eyewear based on the ophthalmologist's prescription and the patient's visual needs. Also, for example, regarding your contact lens requirements, I have used equipment to fit, verify, and dispense contact lenses during my internship. In addition to my education, my work experiences helped me to strengthen several qualities and skills particularly related to patient care and teamwork. In my recent role as an EKG Technician, I worked alongside a physician and gained a more in-depth understanding of EKG interpretation; I enhanced my communication skills and my technical abilities as well.

Attached is my résumé for your review. I am eager to discuss my skills and abilities with you in more detail and look forward to hearing from you. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name  
Phone  
Email

# Transferable Skills Cover Letter Sample

Richard Anderson 1234,  
West 67 Street  
Carlisle, MA 01741  
(123) 456 7890

May 1, 2013

Mr. John Smith,  
Human Resource Manager  
National Hospital  
257 Park Avenue South New  
York, NY 12345-6789

Dear Mr. Smith:

Goodwin University has enabled me to build my knowledge of medical practice competencies and interpersonal skills, so important to be successful as a Medical Assistant with National Hospital. I thrive on challenge and change, and I look forward to new opportunities to build positive patient relationships every day.

I believe that as a medical assistant, reliability, analytic skills, organizational abilities, and creativity in tackling problems will make a positive contribution. I am equally comfortable working independently to meet goals, as well as collaboratively as part of a team. I have always been able to establish and maintain excellent relationships with clients and coworkers at all levels. My professional skills include:

- Professional Skill #1
- Professional Skill #2
- Professional Skills #3

I would welcome the chance to provide you with additional information. I look forward to hearing from you in order to further discuss my background and qualifications. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Anderson  
Email  
Telephone

## Letter Of Interest Sample

1234 West 67 Street  
Carlisle, MA 01741

May 1, 2019

Human Resource Manager  
National Hospital  
257 Park Avenue South New  
York, NY 12345-6789

Dear Human Resource Manager:

I am a certified medical assistant and I would like to inquire about positions at **ABD Medical Practice**. The practice has been recommended to me as a highly regarded organization which takes an interest in providing further training and growth for its employees.

I have an Associate's Degree in Medical Assisting from Goodwin University and my education has provided me with a solid understanding of the role of a medical assistant within a variety of environments. In addition, I completed an externship focusing on key competencies and duties within the field. This externship enabled me to interact with the healthcare team, both clinical and support staff.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss any open positions with you and to provide further information regarding my background and interests. I look forward to speaking with you about any appropriate open positions or any ideas that you may have to assist me in my job search. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Name  
richardanderson5@att.net  
860-727-6768



## Sample Networking Letter

1234 West 67 Street  
Carlisle, MA 01741

May 1, 2019

Contact Name  
Title Company  
Address  
City, State, Zip

Dear Ms. Contact:

I was referred to you by **Contact Name** from **XYZ Company** in Hartford, CT. She recommended you as an excellent source to network with regarding upcoming opportunities in the **(note the particular field of interest)**.

My goal is to secure an entry-level position **(note field, i.e. Business, Healthcare, etc.)**. Additionally, I would appreciate hearing your advice on career opportunities, on conducting an effective job search, and on how best to uncover job leads from your perspective.

My résumé is attached for your review. Thank you so much, in advance, for providing me any insight and advice you would be willing to share.

Sincerely,

Name  
Telephone  
Email

## SAMPLE LIST OF ACTION WORDS

### Management Skills

administered  
analyzed  
assigned  
attained  
chaired  
contracted  
consolidated  
coordinated  
delegated  
developed  
directed  
evaluated  
executed  
improved  
increased  
organized  
oversaw  
planned  
prioritized  
produced  
recommended  
reviewed  
scheduled  
strengthened

### Communication Skills

addressed  
arbitrated  
arranged  
authored  
corresponded  
developed  
directed  
drafted  
edited  
enlisted  
formulated  
influenced  
interpreted  
lectured  
mediated  
moderated  
motivated  
negotiated  
persuaded  
promoted  
publicized  
reconciled  
recruited  
spoke  
translated

### Clerical or Detailed Skills

approved  
arranged  
catalogued  
classified  
collected  
compiled  
dispatched  
executed  
generated  
implemented  
inspected  
monitored  
operated  
organized  
prepared  
organized  
processed  
purchased  
recorded  
retrieved  
screened  
specified  
systematized  
tabulated  
validated

### Financial Skills

administered  
allocated  
analyzed  
appraised  
audited  
balanced  
budgeted  
calculated  
computed  
developed  
forecasted  
managed  
marketed  
planned  
projected  
researched

### Helping Skills

assessed  
assisted  
clarified  
coached  
counseled  
demonstrated  
diagnosed  
educated  
expedited  
facilitated  
familiarized  
guided  
referred  
rehabilitated  
represented

### Creative Skills

acted  
conceptualized  
created  
designed  
developed  
directed  
established  
fashioned  
founded  
illustrated  
instituted  
integrated  
introduced  
invented  
originated  
performed  
planned  
revitalized  
shaped

### Research Skills

clarified  
collected  
critiqued  
diagnosed  
evaluated  
examined  
extracted  
identified  
inspected  
interpreted  
interviewed  
investigated  
organized  
reviewed  
summarized  
surveyed  
systematized

### Technical Skills

assembled  
built  
calculated  
computed  
designed  
devised  
engineered  
fabricated  
maintained  
operated  
overhauled  
programmed  
remodeled  
repair  
solved  
trained  
upgraded

### Teaching Skills

adapted  
advised  
clarified  
coached  
communicated  
coordinated  
developed  
enabled  
encouraged  
evaluated  
explained  
facilitated  
guided  
informed  
initiated  
instructed  
persuaded  
set goals  
stimulated

# Summary

CRITERIA	Cover letter should get you the interview.
<b>Business format and overall quality of writing ability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This letter uses correct business format with date and addresses at the top, and a salutation at the conclusion of the letter.</li> <li>• This letter is clear and concise, and grammatically correct. There are no spelling errors. <b>*Font size 12</b></li> </ul>
<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This section identifies the position for which you are applying and explains why you are interested in the job.</li> <li>• You have described how you heard about the opening.</li> <li>• The wording is creative and catches an employer's attention quickly.</li> </ul>
<b>Section 2: Identification of skills and experiences as related to position</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This letter identifies one or two of your strongest qualifications and clearly relates how these skills apply to the job at hand.</li> <li>• This letter explains specifically why you are interested in the position and this type of job, company, and/or location.</li> </ul>
<b>Section 3: Closing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This letter refers the reader to your résumé or any other attached or uploaded documents.</li> <li>• This letter thanks the reader for taking time to read this letter.</li> </ul>