



WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

GETTING NOTICED BY POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

COVER LETTERS

A cover letter usually accompanies a résumé or curriculum vitae. It should be written to show how your skills and experience meet the specific requirements of a position. Be simple and direct in your cover letter; remember that most people spend less than 10–30 seconds reading a cover letter and résumé.

A cover letter typically consists of three short paragraphs. In the first paragraph, explain how you know of the company, state the job you are interested in, and describe how you fit with the company's needs.

In the second paragraph, list your strengths, accomplishments, skills, and goals, and explain how these will add value to the company. Power Statements and other techniques taught in the Career Workshop can help you do this.

In the third paragraph, indicate that you will follow up by a specific date to answer questions. You may also indicate that you want to arrange for an interview.

As you write your cover letter, include the specific job title you are applying for, and use other key words that the employer will recognize as requirements for the job.

When sending a résumé as an e-mail attachment, send the cover letter in the same attachment. For example, if you have a two-page résumé, send a three-page attachment, with the cover letter as the first page and the résumé as the second and third pages.

Customize each letter with accurate company, job, and specific contact information.

The introduction should be strong and straightforward. Minimize the use of "I," especially at the beginning of a sentence.

Joe Jobseeker
12334 N. East Dr.
Plain City, CA 90987
1-987-555-3210
Joe_jobseeker@e-mail.com

May 25, 2007

Mr. John Doe, District Sales Manager
XYZ Corporation
1234 Main St.
Plain City, CA 90987

Dear Mr. Doe,

For more than 12 years I have been in international sales, with the last 8 years in the biotech industry. I have lived in four different countries and have worked with both civilian and military establishments in developing sales. Your recent ad in the *Wall Street Journal* for a sales engineer indicates that your needs are well matched by my qualifications:

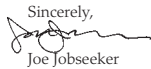
You Require

- 8–10 years sales and marketing experience
- Overseas selection and training
- Knowledge of selling U.S. products overseas
- Engineering degree
- Knowledge of foreign biotech industries

My Experience

- 12 years in international sales
- Hired, directed, and trained more than one hundred sales reps in four countries
- Generated \$28 million in sales with excellent margins
- BS degree in chemical engineering
- Worked with numerous markets in various countries

I feel confident that my expertise would benefit an established, growing biotech company such as yours. I will call you early next week to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your attention. I look forward to discussing the benefits I could bring to your company.

Sincerely,

Joe Jobseeker

Use the specific job title; show how you meet the job requirements. The cover letter should not, however, be a summary of your résumé.

Always promise to follow up, thank the reader for his or her time and consideration, and sign the letter.

"Be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great."



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EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS

Employers use applications to judge you. Applications also provide an opportunity to sell your qualifications. The following suggestions will help you make a positive first impression.

Following Directions

Read the entire application before you begin. Pay close attention to what is asked and how you should respond. Observe instructions such as “Do not write below this line” and “Office use only.”

Positive Visual Impact

Print neatly, and use correct spelling and grammar. Use black ink, and respond to all questions. Don't leave any spaces blank or questions unanswered. Write “NA” (not applicable) if an item doesn't apply to you. Avoid negative information if possible. Look for ways to show you're the right person for the job.

Content

When the application asks what position you are seeking, use the specific job title used in the advertisement (not “Any” or “Open”). If you are interested in more than one job, fill out more than one application. Include education, employment history, clear and concise descriptions of previous job duties, a list of significant skills, and reference information. However, don't volunteer more information than the employer requires. Try to use positive statements about why you left a job. If possible, avoid terms like “Fired,” “Quit,” “Illness,” or “Personal Reasons.” Such terms may screen you out of the job.

Honesty

Your application will become a permanent part of your record when hired. False information can be a basis for dismissal.

Salary Requirements

Use “Open” or “Negotiable” in response to salary questions.

References

When asked to provide references, choose people who can talk specifically about your qualifications. Ask them for permission to use them as references, and give them suggestions of things they might say about you. Work and professional references usually carry more weight than academic or personal references.

THANK-YOU LETTERS

A good follow-up letter, such as a thank-you letter, is one of the most important tools in job searching and networking. Send a thank-you letter within three days of your conversation or interview.

In the letter, thank the person for taking time to meet with you, and reemphasize your interest. Refer to things you discussed in your conversation or interview that were most appealing to you. Thank the person again for his or her time and consideration. Offer to provide further information as needed, and offer to meet again.



LDS EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE SERVICES

The Career Workshop, LDS Employment Resource Services, and your stake employment specialist will help you to create impressive written communications.

“I benefited greatly from the efforts with communication and follow-up letters and have now cultivated a job offer!”

Bountiful, Utah

“Never underestimate the value of things you learn from the Career Workshop. From the Coat of Arms, ‘Me in 30 Seconds’ statement, Power Statements, cover letters, application letters, thank-you letters, making a powerful impression, and everything else that is taught in the workshop, you never know which one is going to impress them the most and get you the job. I gave a powerful ‘Me in 30 Seconds’ statement, but my thank-you letter was what impressed them the most.”

Harare, Zimbabwe