

# Cover Letter Guide

The cover letter introduces you to potential employers and demonstrates how your strengths and background match the experience required in the job/internship posting. This is your opportunity to let the employer know why you are applying to the position. Be sure to demonstrate your enthusiasm for the position you are applying for. Your cover letter should be focused on the needs of the employer, not your own, and should always accompany a resume. You will need to tailor the cover letter for each position!



## Use Same header as your resume

### Paragraph

1

- Addresses the question, "Why them?"
- Why you are applying and how you found the position
- Highlight why you are interested in the position

### Paragraph

2

- Answers question, "Why you?"
- Expand on qualifications using examples from your resume
- Use the job description to select the experiences/skills to highlight
- Incorporate industry language and action verbs

### Paragraph

3

- Thank them for their time
- State enthusiasm to have an interview
- Specify how to reach you, cell or email

## Best Practices

- Avoid overusing "I"
- Tailor to employers needs
- Use keywords from job description
- Spelling/grammar error free
- Avoid "love" language
- 1-3 paragraphs
- 1 page in length

**Follow up in a week if no response, confirm receipt of resume and application, share continued interest in the position.**

## FIRST NAME LAST NAME

Street Address

City, State, Zip

T 555-555-5555

E [firstname.lastname@email.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@email.com)

25 July 2014

Supervisor Name

Career Services

Lougheed Center for Applied Learning

SUNY Potsdam

Potsdam, NY 13676

Dear Mr./Mrs. Supervisor Name:

I am a freshman at SUNY Potsdam and am excited at the prospect of working with Career Services as a Peer Advisor. Having taken two public speaking courses during my high school career, I am very comfortable speaking in front of large groups of people and my strong leadership skills would make me a valuable asset to the Career Services team.

During my senior year of high school, I organized a school-wide, group discussion about diversity in higher education. This project allowed me to independently pursue a topic that interests me and improved my organizational skills, teaching me how to effectively lead a group of my peers. Besides my academic commitments, I am also currently a member of the Debate Club and the Swim Team at SUNY Potsdam. In these experiences I utilize my leadership qualities to build motivation within those around me to work successfully towards a common goal.

In summary, I bring strong organization and interpersonal skills that make me a prime candidate for this position. I hope to have the opportunity to discuss with you the contribution I can make to Career Services as a Peer Advisor, and am available to interview at your convenience. The best way to reach me is by phone at (123) 456-7890, or by email at [myemail@potdam.edu](mailto:myemail@potdam.edu).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name

## FIRST NAME LAST NAME

Street Address

City, State, Zip

T 555-555-5555

E [firstname.lastname@email.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@email.com)

## REFERENCES

1. Name  
Title  
Organization  
Address  
City, State Zip  
Email:  
Phone:
2. Name  
Title  
Organization  
Address  
City, State Zip  
Email:  
Phone:
3. Name  
Title  
Organization  
Address  
City, State Zip  
Email:  
Phone:

# FirstName LastName

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[freshmanemail@potsteam.edu](mailto:freshmanemail@potsteam.edu) | 123 Mystreet, Mytown, NY 12345 | (123) 456-7890

August 31, 2018

Supervisor Name  
Career Services  
Lougheed Center for Applied Learning  
SUNY Potsdam  
Potsdam, NY 13676

Dear Mr./Mrs. Supervisor Name:

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Sincerely,

Your Name

# Ima Bear

[imabear@potdam.edu](mailto:imabear@potdam.edu) | 123 Mystreet, Mytown, NY 12345 | (012) 345-6789

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## References

1. Name  
Title  
Organization  
Address  
City, State Zip  
Email:  
Phone:
2. Name  
Title  
Organization  
Address  
City, State Zip  
Email:  
Phone:
3. Name  
Title  
Organization  
Address  
City, State Zip  
Email:  
Phone:

# Cover Letter Rubric

	COVER LETTER SHOULD GET YOU THE INTERVIEW.	COVER LETTER COULD LAND YOU AN INTERVIEW. THIS IS AN AVERAGE LETTER (BORDERLINE CASE).	COVER LETTER NEEDS SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT AND WOULD BE DISCARDED DURING SCREENING.
<b>BUSINESS FORMAT AND OVERALL QUALITY OF WRITING ABILITY</b>	This letter uses correct business format with date and addresses at the top, and a signature at the bottom. This letter is clear and concise, and grammatically correct. There are no spelling errors.	This letter uses correct business format with date and addresses at the top, and a signature at the bottom. There are minimal grammar and spelling errors. While its content is decent, this letter does not convince an employer to call.	Business formatting is not used in this letter. There is no address or date at the top. This letter is not signed. There are multiple grammar and spelling errors. The content of this letter does not make sense to the reader.
<b>SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	This section identifies the position for which you are applying and explains why you are interested in the job. You have described how you heard about the opening. The wording is creative and catches an employer's attention quickly.	This section identifies the position you are seeking. This letter does not describe how you heard about the opening. You vaguely describe why you are interested in this job. This section is bland and might not catch someone's attention fast enough.	This section does not clearly identify what position you are seeking. There is no description of how you heard about the position or why you are interested. This letter definitely will not grab an employer's attention and keep him or her reading.
<b>SECTION 2: IDENTIFICATION OF SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES AS RELATED TO POSITION</b>	This letter identifies one or two of your strongest qualifications and clearly relates how these skills apply to the job at hand. This letter explains specifically why you are interested in the position and this type of job, company, and/or location.	This letter identifies one of your qualifications, but it is not related to the position at hand. This letter restates what is on your resume with minimal additional information. You explain why you are interested in the position but are too vague.	This letter does not discuss any relevant qualifications. You have not related your skills to the position for which you are applying. This letter does not state why you are interested in the position, company, and/or location.
<b>SECTION 3: CLOSING</b>	This letter refers the reader to your resume or any other enclosed documents. This letter thanks the reader for taking time to read this letter. You are assertive as you describe how you will follow up with the employer in a stated time period.	You thank the reader for taking time to read this letter. You do not refer the reader to your resume or application materials. This letter assumes that the employer will contact you to follow up.	This letter does not thank the reader for taking time to review this letter. There is no reference to a resume or other materials. This letter does not mention any plan for follow up.

by Amy Diepenbrock. Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers.