

Cover Letter Guide



UNIVERSITY OF
BALTIMORE

Career and Internship
Center

COVER LETTERS OR LETTERS OF APPLICATION

PURPOSE OF THE COVER LETTER

- To get an employer to read your resume
- To acquaint the employer with your unique skills and experience
- To stimulate an interest in you as a possible interviewee and to get you an interview
- To enhance your resume

COVER LETTER BASICS

- Always goes with a resume
- One-page document
- Usually three to four paragraphs
- Clear, concise, and specific to position
- Addressed to a specific person—name and title, Not “To Whom It May Concern.” You may need to call the human resources department of the company to get the name. If you cannot get the name, use “Dear Prospective Employer” or “Dear [Title of Person]”
- Error free
- Plan your letter before you write it. It is good to write a rough draft. Read your letter out loud. It should sound as if you were talking to the employer.
- Research the company—know what they want; find out what their problems are or might be; tell them how you can fulfill their needs.
- Have your cover letter critiqued by The Career Center

INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN A COVER LETTER

Cover letters convey three major points

1. **The job you are applying for, where you heard about the job, and your interest in the position.**
 - If it is a job you heard about, state the source (e.g. newspaper, professor, online posting), the date of the advertisement, if applicable
2. **Your qualifications.**
 - Emphasize the qualifications you possess that may have been specifically mentioned in the job lead or are necessary for the position to which you are applying (such as education, experience, and personal qualities). Highlight these qualifications by utilizing examples
3. **Ways the employer can follow-up with you.**
 - List your phone number (have a professional voicemail) and email in the final paragraph

A FEW ADDITIONAL POINTS TO REMEMBER...

- Demonstrate your communication skills through the cover letter
- Always mention the name of your contact (a familiar name gets attention)
- Say something nice about the company you apply to and include your knowledge of the company and their practices
- Use appropriate industry terminology in your writing. You can learn this by researching the field and company you are considering
- Accent the positive
- Mention in the letter that you are enclosing your resume and refer them to its contents
- End by thanking them for their time and consideration of your application
- Sentences must be grammatically correct
- Bring your draft to The Career Center for a critique before sending
- Personally sign the cover letter (if sending in the mail)
- Keep copies of all correspondence and company information
- Make sure the quality and color of the paper match what you have used for your resume
- Experience to consider: projects you’ve worked on as a leader or a member, sports team you either led or joined, your role in student worker positions (research, teaching assistant, work-study or internships)
- Use accomplishment statements to support your position as the most qualified candidate for this role (use our accomplishment statement worksheet below to practice)
- Focus on highlighting initiatives you’ve spearheaded, new product or program development. You would also want to discuss your leadership ability, communication and creative skills, and team work

NOTE

The follow-up to a cover letter is up to you. You are the one who is marketing your services. Do not wait around for the employer to call or write you. It is perfectly acceptable to contact the addressee of your cover letter and ask if he/she has received it. This may also be a good time to try to set up an interview appointment. Wait 10 days to 2 weeks and then call.

COVER LETTER TEMPLATE

Name

City & State – Phone Number – Email – Website (or add link to your LinkedIn profile)

Date

Make sure the header with your contact information looks exactly like the one on your resume

Name of Hiring Manager (if applicable)

Job Title of Hiring Manager (if applicable)

Name of Hiring Company

Location of the Hiring Company

If you can't find the name of the hiring manager and their title, address the letter to the department, division, or team listed on the job description

Reference: Name of Position You're Applying To (and Job ID #)

Greeting (e.g. Dear (full name of hiring manager). Do not include Mr., Mrs., or Miss to keep it gender neutral),

Paragraph 1: Opening Statement– explain here the purpose of your letter (show enthusiasm here), how you learned about the role (e.g. school website, LinkedIn, newspaper, referral, etc), why you are interested (make mention of relevant years of experience and key qualifications that makes you're a good fit for this role).

Paragraph 2: Summary of Qualifications– Specify here what makes you especially qualified to succeed in the role to which you are applying. For instance, this is where you want to make mention of relevant job titles and companies where you've worked and the overall job done or the courses, volunteer work, and/or internships completed where you've either acquired or applied the technical skills, software, and/or special knowledge they are seeking which supports your qualifications.

Paragraph 3: Examples of Related Projects or Accomplishments– This is where you want to provide further evidence of your work ethic or work completed. You can also use this space to explain how you have applied your acquired skills to complete some school or work projects related to the job you are applying to.

- Project 1 (or Accomplishment 1)
- Project 2 (or Accomplishment 2)
- Project 3 (or Accomplishment 3)

Final Paragraph: Call to Action– Reiterate your interest and key qualifications for this role. And indicate here when and how the hiring manager can reach you.

Salutation here

Signature here

COVER LETTER BUILDER

Name

City & State – Phone Number – Email – Website (or add link to your LinkedIn profile)

Date

Name of Hiring Manager (if applicable)

Job Title of Hiring Manager (if applicable)

Name of Hiring Company

Location of the Hiring Company

Reference: Name of Position You're Applying To (and Job ID #)

Greeting (e.g. Dear (full name of hiring manager). Do not include Mr., Mrs., or Miss to keep it gender neutral),

Paragraph 1: Opening Statement– _____

Paragraph 2: Summary of Qualifications– _____

Paragraph 3: Examples of Related Projects or Accomplishments– _____

• Project 1 (or Accomplishment 1) _____

• Project 2 (or Accomplishment 2) _____

• Project 3 (or Accomplishment 3) _____

Final Paragraph: Call to Action – Reiterate your interest and key qualifications for this role. And indicate here when and how the hiring manager can reach you.

(Place Your Salutation Below)

(Place Your Digital or Hand Written Signature Below)

ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS WORKSHEET

The CCAR Model

Write compelling job-related accomplishment statements on your cover letter by using the CCAR Model. This model provides a framework to easily and effectively convey your qualifications to a hiring manager in your cover letter. This tool has been highly regarded in the public sector and could be exactly what you need to help you land a job interview in any sector. It is also an excellent tool to use when preparing to answer interview questions. The original builder can be found [here](#).

The CCAR model will allow you to focus on the following 4 areas:

- (C)hallenge encountered
- (C)ontext of the challenge
- (A)ctions taken to resolve the challenge
- (R)esults of your actions

You are encouraged to first see an example of how this was applied [here](#).

Accomplishment Story Title

First, think about giving a title to your accomplishments. Doing so would be useful when providing examples of success while writing your resume or during the interviewing process.

Example: Secured five \$500 corporate sponsorships for my student organization...

Challenge

What specific challenge did you encounter as you completed that task?

Example: Historical low engagement rate with local businesses to secure in-kind or monetary donations

Context

Explain here the context surrounding the challenge.

Example: Were your resources limited due to budgetary constraint, particular laws, or policies? Did it require the involvement of various stakeholders? Was leadership or other team members not on board? Which elements needed to be taken into consideration to complete the task and overcome the challenge?

Action

Share a few actions you've taken to overcome the challenge and successfully complete the tasks at hand.

Example: What specific action(s) did you take to address the challenge? Did you research something? Did you answer difficult questions before a hostile audience? Did you figure out how to do more with less?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Results

Share here the outcome of your hard work. Quantify with numbers if possible.
Example: Was the problem solved? Did you save money? Did you reduce processing time; if so by how much? Did you receive an award? Did your supervisor or customers make positive comments to you? Did you increase customer satisfaction (give an average percentage)? Did you increase membership (if so, say by how much)?

COVER LETTER—INTERNSHIP SAMPLE

John Doe

Baltimore, MD – 410-XXX-XXXX – jdoe@ubalt.edu – www.jdoe.com

John's contact information looks exactly like the format found on his resume

Do Something
Internship Coordinator
24-32 Union Square East
Fourth Floor
New York, NY 10003

John identified the name of the hiring manager and appropriate job title. John also listed the address of the company.

Dear Internship Coordinator,

Reference: Intern (Job ID# PL0215)

Dear Jane Doe,

John expressed genuine interest, tying it to the mission or goal of the team he wants to join. He also highlighted one thing he appreciates about the company to convey his interest, which demonstrates to the recruiter that this candidate has taken the time to read up on the company.

John intentionally highlighted relevant projects to demonstrate the way he applied the top skills the employer is seeking.

I am an avid social justice advocate and was very impressed to see all the various causes promoted by Do Something, specifically its recent community building project with Harlem Rebuild Inc. For this reason, I am submitting my application to be considered for the internship role so that I can utilize my research skills and my passion for community development to further your mission in revitalizing the low-to-moderate income neighborhoods in New York.

I am currently an honor student in my junior year studying Marketing and Real Estate at the Merrick School of Business at the University of Baltimore. I have dedicated my scholastic and student involvement work to increase my knowledge about community development best practices so that I can better partake in local initiatives to improve the Baltimore community. The following projects enabled me to combine and apply my research skills, marketing and real estate knowledge, and include:

If applicable, add any quantitative information and technical skills applied to your accomplishments. (i.e increased participation rate by 15%; developed 5 video games with the use of Unity; etc)

- Conducted qualitative research to compare and analyze community development projects by nonprofits in the DC/Baltimore area
- Designed and implemented a marketing plan and a social media campaign to promote XYZ's (a local nonprofit) brand to the Baltimore community
- Performed SWOT analysis for ABC, a local nonprofit, to help improve their daily organizational operations and overcome their branding challenges in the city
- I also volunteered in Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina, which further enlightened me to the issues of insufficient disaster relief, racism, and poverty in our own country, and ultimately inspired to pursue a career in community development.

I am confident that my research and marketing skills, my education, and my passion for community involvement will enable me to succeed in this role. I would appreciate the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications with you and can be reached at 410-XXX-XXXX or via email at jdoe@ubalt.edu on Mondays through Fridays after 3pm.

Reiterate the reason you are the right candidate for this role and how you can be reached.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

John Doe

COVER LETTER—FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

John Doe

Baltimore, MD – 410-XXX-XXXX – jdoe@ubalt.edu – www.jdoe.com

Advertising Department
Oakland Athletics Baseball Company
7000 Coliseum Way
Oakland, CA 94621

Friday, June 7, 2019

Reference: Advertising Assistant (Job ID# UR2500)

Dear Advertising Team:

I am writing to express my interest in the Advertising Assistant position with the Oakland Athletics listed on the University of Baltimore (UB) recruiting website. I am a recent graduate with a bachelor's degree in Communication with 3 years of marketing and sales experience in the sports industry, which I believe would greatly benefit your organization.

I presently work as an Event Manager for Big Fish Promotions, the largest promoter for Dunkin' Donuts in the United States, where I am responsible for all facets of the event from supervision and logistics and manage crews of 4 - 6 people at a wide range of events, including sporting, concert, and charity events in the promotion of new Dunkin' Donuts products. Moreover, my experiences as a Marketing Campaign leader for the UB Marketing Association and a Marketing Intern for the Baltimore Rockcats enabled me to achieve the following:

- Led a marketing campaign to promote the club's monthly speaker series program to over 5000+ students at UB
- Designed 15 promotional flyers using Photoshop and Illustrator for the Baltimore Rockcat's upcoming season, which reached over 600 people daily on their social media accounts and website
- Increased ticket sales by 20% through strategic advertising initiatives in partnership with local businesses, local publications such as Baltimore Sun and Baltimore Magazine, and direct marketing (i.e., Choice Ticketing, postal mail requests, and email requests) and incentive programs
- Developed a customer database to keep track of purchased tickets and renewed season packages

My passion for the marketing and sports industry and my natural drive for success are factors that enabled me to exceed expectations and succeed. And I am extremely excited about the potential of working for the Oakland Athletics as an Advertising Assistant to create and implement new advertising initiatives that would increase the overall ticket sales revenue. I would like to schedule an interview with your team to further discuss my qualifications and my future contribution to your organization. I can be reached on Mondays through Thursdays after 2pm (EST) at (410) xxx-xxxx or by email at jdoe@ubalt.edu.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

John F. Doe

Resume Enclosed

COVER LETTER REVIEW CHECKLIST

| Background | | | |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| Job Target | | | |
| General Overview | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| Is the letter in standard business format? | | | |
| Does the letter appear original (not mass-produced)? | | | |
| Does the letter have a clear, easily identifiable objective? | | | |
| Is the letter neatly organized, concise, and sharply focused? | | | |
| Is the letter short, no longer than one page, with concise paragraphs, no longer than three to five sentences in length? | | | |
| Is the letter free of grammar, syntax, punctuation, and capitalization errors? | | | |
| Is the letter visually appealing? | | | |
| Did the letter use the same formatting layout, font, and style as your resume? | | | |
| Header | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| Is your name, address, and contact information as it appears on your resume? | | | |
| Does the letter include a date? Tips: Hard return below header, left or right aligned. Should be dated to date written, but updated as needed depending on date of submission. | | | |
| Does the letter include the addressee's name, title, department, organization and address? | | | |
| Optional: Reference line (Re:) including title and requisition number of position. | | | |
| Does the letter address a specific person? Did you use proper title (Mr., Ms., Dr., etc). If addressee is unknown, did you use a gender neutral salutation? | | | |
| First Paragraph—Opening | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| Does the paragraph list a specific position for which you have applied? | | | |
| Does the paragraph list when and where you learned of the position? | | | |
| If you were referred, did you mention the referrer's name in this paragraph? | | | |
| Second Paragraph—Summary of Experience | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| Does the paragraph summarize your experiences and qualifications as they relate to the position for which you are applying? | | | |
| Is the paragraph focused and succinct? No more than three or four sentences. | | | |
| Do you use numbers, or other relevant measures to show impact or breadth of experience? | | | |

Third Paragraph—Qualifications/Accomplishments

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| Does the paragraph mention the specific needs of the employer, or the requirements of the job? | | | |
| Did you clearly address the employer's needs with specific examples? | | | |
| Is the content focused, addressing the most important requirements of the employer first? | | | |
| Is the material easy to read? Do you use bullets, underlines, or bolding to highlight and isolate key information? | | | |
| Did you adapt the terminology of the job description for your qualifications and accomplishments? | | | |

Fourth Paragraph—Closing/Call to Action

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| Optional: Additional information about you that might be of interest to the hiring company. | | | |
| If required: Salary range expectations (use caution and consider speaking to a coach before handling this tricky topic). | | | |
| Did you confidently and politely call the employer to action? Did you ask for the interview? | | | |
| Did you include information for contacting you? Work number, best time or method of contact, etc? | | | |

Salutations

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| Did you left align your salutation? | | | |
| Did you use a formal and appropriate closing (i.e. Warm regards, Best regards, Respectfully, Sincerely, etc.)? | | | |