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# *How to Write a Cover Letter*

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## *The Brickley Center Career Services*

*Eastern Nazarene College*  
*Contact Career Services for Cover Letter Reviews*  
*617-745-3892*

## What is a Cover Letter?

The cover letter is often your first introduction to a prospective employer. An effective cover letter will provide an introduction, explain the purpose of writing (to apply for a specific job or internship opportunity), and create enough interest to generate an interview. The letter should demonstrate your written communication skills, outline how your skills and experience match the employer's needs, and express your interest and enthusiasm for the position. Do not use a generic cover letter for each resume that you send. Instead, compose a letter that responds specifically to the organization's needs.

### The Cover Letter Should:

- 1. Be directed to a specific individual (if possible)**
  - a. Try to direct your cover letter to a specific person. This increases the chances that the letter will end up in the hands of the person doing the hiring. It also provides the name of the person to follow up with once the letter has been sent.
  
- 2. Be well researched and written – focused on the specific requirements of the position for which you are applying**
  - a. It is best to know something about the organization to which you are applying. You will be able to do most of your research online. The better informed you are about the business (what it does, where its offices are located, number of employees, growth pattern, etc.) the better prepared you will be to write a cover letter describing how you fit into the company's future.
  - b. You also need to know about the duties and responsibilities of the job for which you are applying. This will enable you to respond in your cover letter to the skill requirements and describe the qualifications that you possess that match those requirements.
  
- 3. State only your very best qualifications**
  - a. You will want to include your skills, knowledge, experience, education and attitudes that most closely relate to the job requirements that were listed in the job announcement. It is also best to state in the cover letter any unique qualifications you possess that other applicants may not have.
  
- 4. Request a meeting/interview with the potential employer**
  - a. When ending a cover letter, it is suggested that you request an interview. This should be a positive statement like "I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further describe my qualifications for the clerical opening within the church's administrative offices." Another way of ending the letter is "I will be calling you within a few days to arrange a time for us to meet and answer any questions you might have regarding my qualifications. I am excited about the opportunity to work in an office where integrity and values will be foremost."

Your street address  
City, state, zip

Date

Name of Person (if at all possible, obtain the name of a specific person)  
Title  
Name of Organization  
Street address  
City, state, zip

Dear \_\_\_\_\_: (a colon indicates formality)

(First Paragraph) Explain why you are writing and indicate the position for which you are applying. Tell how you heard about the position and the organization. The first paragraph should catch the attention of the reader and create interest in you as a potential candidate.

(Second Paragraph) Emphasize your skills and qualifications, and demonstrate how your experience meets the requirements for the position. Do not merely repeat the information listed on your resume, but expand on the experiences that are most relevant to this particular employer. Outline the skills you will bring to the position and communicate how you think you will contribute to the organization.

(Third Paragraph) Refer the reader to the documents you have enclosed, such as your resume, application, transcripts, etc. Close the letter by asking for an opportunity to meet to discuss the position. Provide contact numbers and the best way to reach you. Take the initiative and note that you plan to follow up with a phone call. Thank the reader for taking the time to consider your resume.

Sincerely,

*(always handwrite your signature)*

Type your name here

Enclosure(s)

## SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Jane Doe  
23 East Elm Ave  
Quincy, MA 02170

March 18, 2008

Lisa Smith  
Kaiser Permanente  
Staffing Services/HR Department  
4785 N First St  
Fresno, CA 93726

Dear Ms. Smith:

It is with great interest that I submit this letter as a response to your advertisement for a Medical Records Analyst. This position is of great interest to me as I am ready to transition my qualifications into a challenging medical records position with a respected institution like Kaiser Permanent.

In addition to my background as a Certified Medical Assistant, my experience and training has expanded to include medical records analysis and participation in FDA investigational studies. I am involved daily in documenting surgery studies and transmitting study data to the FDA. I possess substantial experience and education in ICD9/CPT coding and classification of diseases. I have completed the necessary course work to become an Accredited Records Technician, and my program will be completed upon the fulfillment of my clinical hours. Along with good decision-making ability, I am highly organized and computer proficient. I am confident of my skills and believe I am a viable candidate for this position.

Please review the attached resume for additional information regarding my training and experience. I appreciate your time in reviewing my qualifications and look forward to speaking with you at your earliest convenience. If you have questions, I can be reached at (617) 888-8888 or by email at [janedoe@enc.edu](mailto:janedoe@enc.edu). Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Jane Doe*

Jane Doe

Enclosure