

COVER LETTERS

Are cover letters necessary?

A cover letter demonstrates to an employer how your experience qualifies you for a particular position. It also serves as an example of your writing skills. In most cases, a cover letter should accompany a resume.

What is the recommended way to send a cover letter?

Use the method requested by the employer. If none is specified, you may:

- send an email, with the cover letter in the message section and your resume as an attachment, or with both your cover letter and resume as attachments;
- insert a cover letter in the job application section of an employer's website or through a job search site; or
- mail a paper copy of your cover letter and resume.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Whenever possible, cite a specific person. It may take research to learn the contact's name, correct spelling and title.

Tailor your letter to the position description and the employer's needs. Focus on strengths that define you as a candidate.

Remember to leave four spaces and sign your name here.

YOUR NAME
Address
City, State, Zip Code
Phone Number
Email Address

Date

Name
Title
Company Name
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Ms./Mr. Name:

OPENING PARAGRAPH: State that you are applying for a specific position and how you learned of the position, using a contact name when possible. Personalize the letter by saying why you want to work for this organization.

MIDDLE PARAGRAPH(S): Succinctly outline the qualifications that make you a strong candidate. Relate your qualifications to the needs of the current job opening. Specific examples can demonstrate your skills and experiences.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH: Discuss your next action step. Repeat your interest in the position. Thank the employer for reviewing your resume.

Sincerely,

Four spaces
Your name typed

Use the same heading that you use for your resume.

Use a colon here.

Conduct a spell check and review your letter carefully for errors.

Use quality paper that matches your resume. A one-inch margin all around is preferred.

Sample Internship Description

Event Planning Intern: The intern works with the Director to plan and execute events and educational programs. Responsibilities include arranging facilities and catering, promoting events to members and to the community, coordinating with speakers and panel experts, and compiling event evaluations. Duties will be approximately 70% project-oriented and 30% clerical. Office duties include working with an organizational database, completing mailings to members, and providing general assistance.

INTERNSHIP COVER LETTER SENT VIA EMAIL

TO: msmith@cdorg.com
SUBJECT: Application for Event Planning Internship
ATTACH: ThomasToreroResume.doc

Dear Mr. Smith:

The Community Development Organization recently posted a listing for an event planning intern on its web site. After reviewing the requirements for the position and learning more about your economic revitalization programs in southeast San Diego, I am very interested in applying for this internship.

As a junior Communication Studies major at the University of San Diego, I possess many of the skills that you require for this internship. Last year, I volunteered on USD's Social Issues Conference committee, which provided me with excellent experience in planning a complex event. I assisted with scheduling rooms, ordering catering, working with outside vendors, and helping our keynote speaker with his travel arrangements.

In addition to possessing knowledge and experience related to event planning, I would bring excellent clerical skills to the Community Development Organization. For the past three years, I have worked at the front desk of the Dean's office. In this position, I assist the USD community and am trusted to enter detailed information into several databases.

My resume is attached for your review. I would bring a strong work ethic and a genuine interest in event planning to your organization. Thank you for considering my application and interview request.

Sincerely,

Thomas Torero
1234 Alcalá Place
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 555-1234
ttorero-08@sandiego.edu

Be sure to include your contact information in your email signature.

Sample Position Description

Sales & Marketing Assistant: Use your leadership and excellent communication skills to serve our valued clients. Recruit, interview, market and build current and prospective client relationships. Tap into your sales potential, outstanding recruitment knowledge and superb account management skills when placing our contract employees. With dedication and hard work, you can move up the corporate ladder and advance into a leadership position. Visit our website at www.hightechfirm.com. Send all correspondence to Sally J. Harris, HR Director, HighTech Firm, 3030 Build St., Suite 2301, Boston, MA 06045.

JOB COVER LETTER WITH TRADITIONAL FORMAT

ALICIA ALCALA
123 Linda Vista Road
San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 555-1234
alicia@sandiego.edu

October 5, 2009

Sally J. Harris
Human Resources Director
HighTech Firm
3030 Build St., Suite 2301
Boston, MA 06045

Dear Ms. Harris:

I am writing to apply for the sales and marketing assistant position that HighTech Firm posted with USD Career Services. Paul McLain, an associate at your firm and a recent USD graduate, has encouraged me to apply.

Your advertisement states that hard-working individuals with excellent communication and organizational skills are the best candidates for this position. I am a dedicated worker with the education and internship experiences needed to work effectively with your clients. As an intern with Go-Med, a high-tech medical supply company, I assessed client needs and promoted product lines. I learned the value of active listening and asking questions in order to learn what clients want from a service provider.

I combine effective communication with strong organizational skills. Over the last four years, I have developed excellent time management practices by balancing the demands of part-time work, school, internships, and volunteer service. I hope to apply all these skills in working as a sales and marketing assistant for HighTech Firm.

I would like to discuss how I might meet your needs in filling this position. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alicia Alcala

Sample Position Description

Residential Counselor: Work actively with children and adolescents within our residential unit. Implement individual and group programs through the care, supervision, monitoring and direction of clients. Must be at least 21 years of age. Position requires excellent interpersonal skills and strong problem solving and teamwork skills. Social service experience with children, adolescents and families preferred. Previous experience in a residential setting desirable, but not required. The opportunity will be especially interesting to those individuals graduating with a **BA/BS** in psychology, sociology, human services or social work. Mail letter and resume to Ronald Glenn, Director, Community Partnerships, 555 Glendale Parkway, San Diego, CA 92108.

JOB COVER LETTER WITH ALTERNATE FORMAT

Joe Torero

123 Elm Street • San Diego, CA 92110 • (619) 555-5555
jtorero@gmail.com

October 5, 2009

Ronald Glenn
Director, Community Partnerships
555 Glendale Parkway
San Diego, CA 92108

Dear Mr. Glenn:

I am writing in response to your advertisement for a **Residential Counselor** posted in the May 3 edition of the *San Diego Union Tribune*. As you will note in the enclosed resume, I am graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of San Diego. I have outlined the requirements you are seeking that correspond with my skills and experiences.

Social service experience with children, adolescents and families

During my summer internship at the San Diego Alliance for Families, I worked closely with mental health professionals providing counseling and program treatment to patients with alcohol or other chemical dependencies. Working with a caseworker, I interviewed, assessed and developed treatment and discharge plans for a caseload of 20 patients. As a Big Brother with Big Brothers and Sisters of San Diego County, I served for 18 months as a mentor and positive role model to an underprivileged 13-year-old boy.

Excellent interpersonal skills

For over a year, I have worked in Nordstrom's Customer Service Department. In that capacity, I respond in a calm and professional manner to the complaints of dissatisfied customers. I also answer phones, issue refunds, place online orders, and respond to questions from vendors and warehouse personnel. During that time, I have never received a complaint, and have been cited repeatedly for my responsiveness to the concerns of customers and vendors alike.

Strong problem solving and teamwork skills

As vice president of my fraternity, I work cooperatively with executive board members to resolve difficult interpersonal and procedural problems. I plan, schedule and conduct weekly meetings, and enforce fraternity rules and regulations.

I look forward to the prospect of working for Community Partnerships. I am available for an interview at your earliest convenience. Thank you for giving my application serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Joe Torero