



Header (same as on resume)

Date (January 1, 2014)

Mr./Ms. Name of Individual  
Job Title of Individual  
Company or Organization Name  
Street Address or P.O. Box Number  
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Contact Name:

No contact name? Consider these options:

- Reach out to the Business Career Center
- Call the HR office to ask to whom you should address application materials
  - Most likely, an HR contact or contact within the department where you are applying
  - Probably not the CEO

**This section is only for typed letters, sent by mail or as an attachment.**

**Start here for cover letters written as the body of an email (most commonly for inquiry and networking).**

**Opening Paragraph**

- State the purpose of your letter. You are either:
  - **Inquiring about available or potential openings.** For example, "I am writing to express my interest in internship opportunities with your ABC department..."
  - **Applying for a known opening.** Mention how you learned of the opportunity. For example, "I am writing in response to the Marketing Intern opportunity posted in Marquette University's Career Manager," or "...posting for a General Management Intern posted on the ABC Company web site."
- Describe why you are interested in *this* employer or organization. This is where you have an opportunity to explain to an employer why you are interested in a specific position with *his/her* company and not just *any* position. For example, "after reviewing your web site, I was impressed to learn..." or "The mission of your organization focusing on ABC resonates with my professional commitment to..."
  - Be SPECIFIC! In addition to demonstrating what you learned about the company, an employer can learn about YOU based on the details you highlight.

**Middle Paragraph(s)**

- This is the section where you describe and sell your qualifications for the position.
- Customize your descriptions for each employer. Review the job description to identify the skills and experiences that seem most important to each employer.
- Include specific examples of your demonstrated skills and/or related experience. Focus on job related skills, class projects, accomplishments, etc. Providing examples of your skills helps an employer better understand your qualifications. A cover letter enables a writer to expand on the descriptions in his/her resume: take advantage of the opportunity to share information about you.
- Examples can be written in paragraph form or using bullet points. Paragraphs often offer a better opportunity to demonstrate writing skills and provide detail. If using paragraphs, this section can be one or two paragraphs depending on the number of examples you choose to describe.
- Keep the tone and content positive: focusing on what you can offer rather than what you want from an employer or position.
  - Avoid numerous "I" statements. Use phrasing that focuses on how you can contribute to an organization, position or department. Balance describing your skills and experiences with the employer's needs.

**Closing Paragraph**

- This paragraph is about next steps and professional courtesy rather than further descriptions of your qualifications.
- Reference the materials you have enclosed or attached with the cover letter (resume, references, transcripts, etc.).
- Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.
- Request an opportunity to interview and indicate a time when you will call to follow up on your application (unless the job posting indicates not to call).
  - Expressing your "interest in interviewing" or sharing you "would appreciate the opportunity to interview" can be ways to assertively reference this next step without coming across as too confident.

Sincerely,  
Full name (typed for emailed letters, signed for handwritten letters)

Enclosure(s): Resume, Transcripts, etc. }

**Reference "enclosure(s)" only when mailing paper copies.**