

Cover Letter Handout

To arrange an appointment to review your Cover Letter please contact
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Why use a Cover letter?

Every time you send your CV in response to a job advertisement, it should be accompanied by a cover letter. A cover letter gives you the opportunity to highlight your selling points and explain why you are sending your CV.

It allows you to explain what qualifies you for the opportunity, why you are interested and the emphasis should be on what you can offer rather than placing emphasis on what you are hoping to gain.

A cover letter will yield the best results if it is targeted to "match" a specific job specification. Mass produced cover letters do not generally receive as favourable a response as an individually tailored one.

Address your letter to a specific person rather than "To Whom it May Concern" or "Dear Sir or Madam." You can call companies directly and ask a receptionist for the name, title and correct spelling of the appropriate contact or try to get the information from their website.

Pay particular attention to grammar, typing and spelling; avoid the temptation to turn your cover letter into an extensive autobiography and keep it to one page.

It is important to remember that you are writing the cover letter to get an interview.

Guide to writing a cover letter:

First Paragraph – Clearly communicate the reason why you are writing, name the position for which you are applying, and explain how you heard of the opportunity.

Second Paragraph - State why you are interested in working for this particular company (demonstrate that you have done your research) and specify your interest in this type of work. If you have had experience, point out what particular achievements you have accomplished.

Third Paragraph - Describe your major strengths as they relate to the position you are seeking. The idea is to create interest and show how your skills and qualifications can be of value to the reader--to make them want to know more.

Fourth Paragraph – Express enthusiasm and ask for an interview.

Sincerely,
Your Signature
Your Name (typewritten)

Enclosure (your resume)

Tips for cover letters:

- Show what you can do for the reader; keep the focus on your qualifications and skills and how they match the job spec.
- Limit the letter to one page.
- Examine the job responsibilities and qualifications and design your cover letter to match these as much as you can. If the advertisement is vague look at adverts for similar jobs to infer what skills and abilities might be required.
- Mention one or two specific accomplishments or strengths that demonstrate your expertise or proficiency and make the reader want to know more.
- Use standard Business Letter Format
- Proofread your letter before sending it out. Proper grammar, spelling and punctuation are essential. Never mail a letter with corrections (i.e. tippex etc.).
- Your cover letter should be written to a specific person; *never* address your cover letters to "Dear Sir or Madam." Take the time to get an appropriate contact name, correct spelling and accurate title.
- Always use a professional rather than a conversational tone.
- Write an original cover letter for each employer and position to get the best results it needs to be tailored.
- Be positive in tone, choice of words and expectations; convey your enthusiasm and ask for an interview.

The following cover letters are intended as guides. Cover letters should be original and targeted.

Sample Cover Letter- Final year Accounting

Dear (Name the person)

Re: Name the position

Sample First Paragraph

I would like to apply for the position of Trainee ACA/ Trainee Management Accountant etc and have attached my CV for your attention.

I am writing in response to your advertisement for a trainee accountant, included in the 'Careers Vacancy Newsletter', published by the Careers Service, National College of Ireland, where I am a final year Accountancy student.

I would like to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xx and have attached my CV for your perusal.

I am final year degree student at National College of Ireland specialising in Accounting and would like to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xx.

I am writing to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xxx.

Please accept the enclosed resume as my application for the position of xx at xxx. I am a final year student xxxx

I will complete an honours degree in Accounting & Human Resource Management from the National College of Ireland and will be available to start work in May 2007. I would like to apply for xxx

I am writing to enquire if you have a vacancy in your audit/finance department for which I might be considered. I am in the final year of a BA(Hons) Accounting & Human Resource Management and expect to graduate with a 2:1 degree.

Sample Second Paragraph

I am a final year student specialising in Accounting at the National College of Ireland. The BA (Hons) Accounting & Human Resource Management is a comprehensive degree covering Financial Accounting, Management Accounting and Taxation and we follow the ACA and AITI exam manuals. I have a genuine interest in Audit and am committed to pursuing a career in practice. I have maintained strong results in my exams and have a 67 & 68% average for second and third year. / I have a genuine interest in Management Accounting and am committed to pursuing a career as a CIMA Accountant in Industry.

I am a final year student at National College of Ireland and am specialising in Accounting. The degree is broad and commercially focused and has given me a strong understanding of Financial Accounting, Management Accounting and Taxation. I have maintained strong results in my exams to date upon graduation will have exemptions from the ACA /ACCA CIMA/ AITI exams.

XXX recommended that I contact you. I am about to graduate from xxx and would be very interested in speaking with you about xxx

My interest in Financial Accounting/Management Accounting/Taxation developed over several years, specifically through my degree course and internship in xxx where I gained a valuable insight into xxxx .

Sample Third Year Paragraph

I am hardworking, self motivated and reliable. I have always worked throughout College and this work experience has provided me with concrete skills in the areas of administration, time management, attention to detail, meeting deadlines and flexibility. (*Highlight the skills they have asked for in the job spec*)

During my work experience I have had the opportunity to xxxx, gain exposure to xxx and a valuable insight into xxx. This work experience together with xxx has confirmed my interest in xxxx

While working toward my degree, I was employed as xxxxx where I developed skills in xxx. I have a strong academic background in xxx. I will complete my degree at the end of April and will be available to begin employment in early June

In addition to academic work, I gained practical accountancy work experience during the summer months in a small practice. Whilst there, I was exposed to and participated in a number of different activities including client meetings, bookkeeping, preparing financial statements, preparing VAT returns and bank reconciliations.

My academic and extra curricular activities have given me skills in/ developed skills in xx. My ability to work effectively under pressure has been illustrated by the fact that I worked to support myself during College, whilst retaining my extracurricular interests and maintaining a 2:1 average for 1st, 2nd and third year.

In my curricular and extra curricular achievements during the past four years I have shown initiative, creativity in problem solving and xxxxx in a variety of settings.

My work experience together with my extra curricular activities has given me the ability to work effectively as part of a team, to adapt to new situations quickly and xxxx

My work experience, study and xxx have helped me decide how I want to use my xx degree. I feel that xxx is the type of firm in which I would like to work and that I would bring relevant skills, interests and great enthusiasm. I hope that, after reviewing my CV, you will consider me for xxxxx.

I believe that the skills I have gained from xxx, which include skills in dealing with clients, problem solving, using professional judgment, working effectively in a team and being able to work independently would qualify me for a position as xxxx with xxx. In addition, I bring xxx, xxx and enthusiasm.

Sample Fourth Paragraph

XXX as a firm appeals to me for a number of reasons. I am extremely interested in pursuing a career within practice. I am also drawn to the size of the firm, as I feel it would give me the opportunity to work with a diverse range of clients and on a broad range of issues. I was also incredibly impressed with the representatives I met at the Careers Fair.

I am aware of XXXX as a group, am very interested and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you. I will make myself available for interview at your convenience.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet you and to further discuss your requirements.

I hope my details are of interest and will call you on the XXX to answer any questions you may have. In the meantime please do call me on XXXX

I have enclosed a copy of my CV for your review. I very much appreciate your time and consideration, and I hope to hear from you in the near future.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and I look forward to speaking with you in due course. I look forward to receiving your reply

Yours sincerely,

Sample Cover Letter – with work experience

Dear (Name the person)

Re:

Paragraph 1

I would like to apply for the position of "XXXX" with XXXX and have attached my CV for your attention.

I have xx years experience gained from within xxxxxx. This is a broad role that involves dealing with the full range of xxxxxxxx.

I am currently studying the BA in Human Resource Management at National College of Ireland. This is a comprehensive degree programme covering xxxx and upon completion I will have full graduate membership of CIPD. I am committed to pursuing a career in Human Resources and have performed well in all exams to date. (give results if v good)

I am in the penultimate year of a xxxx which is CIPD accredited. This programme has a strong focus on xxxxx. My work experience together with my academic qualifications has given me concrete skills in the areas of problem solving, communicating, organisational, planning and delivering presentations.

Paragraph 2

I am hardworking, self motivated and reliable. I have a proven track record within xxxxxxxxxxxx and have concrete skills in the areas of administration, time management, attention to detail, meeting deadlines and flexibility (Highlight the skills you have that match the skills they are looking for in the advert).

My experience to date has included exposure to xxx and a valuable insight into xxx. This work experience together with xxx has confirmed my interest in xxx

My current work as xxxxx for xxxxxxxx has given me firsthand experience in the challenges associated with the development and implementation of xxxxxxxx. In addition, I have excellent xxxx and communication skills, as demonstrated by my successful experience in xxxxxxxx. This background, combined with xxxxxxxx, has given me an understanding of xxxxx that would be particularly valuable in meeting the responsibilities of this position, as described in your advertisement. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this position and my qualifications in more detail and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Paragraph 3

I am aware of XXXX as a group, am very interested and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you. I will make myself available for interview at your convenience.

I hope my details are of interest and will call you on the XXX to answer any questions you may have. In the meantime please do call me on XXXX

I look forward to speaking with you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Sample Cover Letter – Final Year – Full Time Human Resources

Dear (Name the person)

Re: Name the position

Sample First Paragraph

I would like to apply for the position of HR Administrator and have attached my CV for your attention.

I would like to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xx and have attached my CV for your perusal.

I am final year degree student at National College of Ireland and would like to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xx.

I am writing to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xxx.

Please accept the enclosed resume as my application for the position of xx at xxx. I am a final year student xxxx

I will be finished my exams in the beginning of May and will be graduating from the National College of Ireland with a BA (Hons) Accounting and Human Resource Management (specialising in HRM) . I would like to apply for xxx

Sample Second Paragraph

I am a final year student specialising in Human Resources at the National College of Ireland. The BA (Hons) Accounting & Human Resource Management is a comprehensive degree covering Strategic Human Resources, Human Resource Development, Employee Resourcing and Industrial Relations. I have a genuine interest in Human Resources and am committed to pursuing a career in this area. I have maintained strong results in my exams and have a 67 & 68% average for second and third year.

I am a final year student at National College of Ireland and am specialising in Human Resources. The degree is broad and commercially focused and has given me a strong understanding of Employment law, Strategic Human Resources, Human Resource Development, Employee Resourcing and Industrial Relations. I have maintained strong results in my exams to date and expect to graduate with a 2:1 degree.

XXX recommended that I contact you. She described your firm as a xxxx in which I would gain exposure to the full range of Human Resource Issues such as xxx . I am about to graduate and would be very interested in speaking with you about xxx

My interest in Human Resources/ Training/ Recruitment has developed over several years, specifically through my degree course and internship in xxx where I gained a valuable insight into xxxx .

Sample Third Paragraph

I am hardworking, self motivated and reliable. I have always worked throughout College and this work experience has provided me with concrete skills in the areas of administration, time management, attention to detail, meeting deadlines and flexibility. (Highlight the skills you have that match what the advert says they are looking for)

During my work experience I have had the opportunity to xxxx, gain exposure to xxx and a valuable insight into xxx. This work experience together with xxx has confirmed my interest in xxxx

While working toward my degree, I was employed as xxxxx where I developed skills in xxx. I have a strong academic background in employment law, xx and xxx. I will complete my degree at the end of April and will be available to begin employment in early June

My academic and extra curricular activities have given me skills in/ developed skills in xx. My ability to work effectively under pressure has been illustrated by the fact that I worked to support myself during College, whilst retaining my extracurricular interests and maintaining a 2:1 average for 1st, 2nd and third year.

In my curricular and extra curricular achievements during the past four years I have shown initiative, creativity in problem solving and xxxxx in a variety of settings.

My work experience together with xxx has given me the ability to work effectively as part of a team and to strict deadlines. In addition to developing my xxx abilities, I gained broad experience in xxxxx.

My work experience, study and xxx have helped me decide how I want to use my xx degree. I feel that xxx is the type of organisation in which I would like to work and that I would bring skills in xx, xxx and xxx, and great enthusiasm. I hope that, after reviewing my CV, you will consider me for xxxxx.

I believe that the skills I have gained from xxx, which include skills in dealing with clients, problem solving, using professional judgment, working effectively in a team and being able to work independently would assist me when working as xxx. In addition, I bring xxx, xxx and enthusiasm.

Sample Fourth Paragraph

XXX as an organisation appeals to me for a number of reasons. I am committed to pursuing a career within Human Resources and I feel that working with xxx I will gain exposure to xxxxx

I am aware of XXXX as a group, am very interested and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you. I will make myself available for interview at your convenience.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet you and to further discuss your requirements.

I hope my details are of interest and will call you on the XXX to answer any questions you may have. In the meantime please do call me on XXXX

I have enclosed a copy of my CV for your review. I very much appreciate your time and consideration, and I hope to hear from you in the near future.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about a XX position with XXX

I look forward to speaking with you in due course.

I look forward to receiving your reply

Yours sincerely,

Sample Cover Letter – Final Year – Software Systems

Dear (Name the person)

Re: Name the position

Sample First Paragraph

I would like to apply for the position of IT XXXX and have attached my CV for your attention.

I would like to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xx and have attached my CV for your perusal.

I am final year degree student at National College of Ireland and would like to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xx.

I am writing to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xxx.

Please accept the enclosed resume as my application for the position of xx at xxx. I am a final year student xxxx

I will be finished my exams in the beginning of May and will be graduating from the National College of Ireland with a BSc (Hons) Software Systems. I would like to apply for xxx

Sample Second Paragraph

I am a final year Software Systems Student at the National College of Ireland. The BSc (Hons) Software Systems is a comprehensive degree covering Software Systems, Operating Systems, Artificial Intelligence, Networking, Software Engineering, Software Development and MultiMedia. I have a genuine interest in XXXX and am committed to pursuing a career in this area. I have maintained strong results in my exams and have a 67 & 68% average for second and third year.

I am a final year student at National College of Ireland studying towards a BSc (Hons) Software Systems. The degree is practical and commercially focused and incorporates a 6 month work experience placement. Throughout the past 4 years I have gained a strong grounding in xxxxxxxxxxxxxx. I have maintained strong results in my exams to date and expect to graduate with a 2:1? Degree.

XXX recommended that I contact you. She described your firm as a xxxx in which I would gain exposure to xxxxxxxx. I am about to graduate and would be very interested in speaking with you about xxx

My interest in xxxx has developed over several years, specifically through my degree course and work placement in xxx where I gained a valuable insight into xxxx .

Sample Third Paragraph

I am hardworking, self motivated and reliable. I have always worked throughout College and this work experience has provided me with concrete skills in the areas of time management, attention to detail, meeting deadlines and flexibility. (*Change this to highlight the skills you have that match the skills they are looking for*)

During my work experience I have had the opportunity to xxxx, gain exposure to xxx and a valuable insight into xxx. This work experience together with xxx has confirmed my interest in xxxx

While working toward my degree, I was employed as xxxxx where I developed skills in xxx. I have a strong academic background in employment law, xx and xxx. I will complete my degree at the end of April and will be available to begin employment in early June

My academic and extra curricular activities have given me skills in/ developed skills in xx. My ability to work effectively under pressure has been illustrated by the fact that I worked to support myself during College, whilst retaining my extracurricular interests and maintaining a 2:1 average for 1st, 2nd and third year.

In my curricular and extra curricular achievements during the past four years I have shown initiative, creativity in problem solving and xxxxx in a variety of settings.

My work experience together with xxx has given me the ability to work effectively as part of a team and to strict deadlines. In addition to developing my xxx abilities, I gained broad experience in xxxxx.

My work experience, study and xxx have helped me decide how I want to use my xx degree. I feel that xxx is the type of organisation in which I would like to work and that I would bring skills in xx, xxx and xxx, and great enthusiasm. I hope that, after reviewing my CV, you will consider me for xxxxx.

I believe that the skills I have gained from xxx, which include skills in dealing with clients, problem solving, using professional judgment, working effectively in a team and being able to work independently would assist me when working as xxx. In addition, I bring xxx, xxx and enthusiasm.

Sample Fourth Paragraph

XXX as an organisation appeals to me for a number of reasons. I am committed to pursuing a career within XXXX and I feel that working with xxx I will gain exposure to xxxxx

I am aware of XXXX as a group, am very interested and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you. I will make myself available for interview at your convenience.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet you and to further discuss your requirements.

I hope my details are of interest and will call you on the XXX to answer any questions you may have. In the meantime please do call me on XXXX

I have enclosed a copy of my CV for your review. I very much appreciate your time and consideration, and I hope to hear from you in the near future.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about a XX position with XXX

I look forward to speaking with you in due course.

I look forward to receiving your reply

Yours sincerely,

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – Summer Job

Dear (Name the person)

Re: Summer work opportunity

Sample First Paragraph

"I am a first-year student at National College of Ireland and am pursuing accountancy summer internship opportunities

I would like to apply for the position of "XXXX" and have attached my CV for your attention.

I would like to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xx and have attached my CV for your perusal.

I am a second year degree/certificate?? student at National College of Ireland and would like to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xx.

I am writing to apply for the position of xxx as advertised in xxx.

Please accept the enclosed resume as my application for the position of xx at xxx. I am a second year student xxxx

The degree programme is broad and commercially focused/ practical/ and has given me an in depth understanding of xxxxx. I have a genuine interest in XXX and am committed to pursuing a career in this area. I have maintained strong results in my exams and have a xxx% average for my semester 1 results.

Sample Second Paragraph

I am hardworking, motivated and reliable. I have always worked throughout College and this work experience has provided me with concrete skills in the areas of administration, time management, attention to detail, meeting deadlines and flexibility.

During my work experience I have had the opportunity to xxxx, gain exposure to xxx and a valuable insight into xxx. This work experience together with xxx has confirmed my interest in xxx

In my curricular and extra curricular achievements I have shown teamworking ability, creativity in problem solving and the ability to meet strict deadlines.

Whilst in College, I have been employed as xxxxx where I developed skills in xxx. I have a strong academic background in xxx. I will complete my exams at the end of April and will be available to begin employment in early May.

My work experience together with xxx has given me the ability to adapt quickly to new situations. In addition to developing my writing abilities, I gained broad experience in xxxxx.

Evidence of my teamworking and leadership skills can be seen in the fact that I captained the xxx team to success in the xxx league.

I feel that xxx is the type of firm in which I would like to work and that I would bring skills in teamworking, communication xxx, xxx, interests and great enthusiasm. I hope that, after reviewing my CV, you will consider me for xxxxx.

I believe that the skills I have gained from xxx, which include skills in dealing with customers, problem solving, using professional judgment, working effectively in a team and being able to work independently would benefit me when working as a xxx with xxx. In addition, I bring xxx, xxx and enthusiasm.

Sample Third Paragraph

I am aware of XXXX as a group, am very interested and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you. I will make myself available for interview at your convenience.

I hope my details are of interest and will call you on the XXX to answer any questions you may have. In the meantime please do call me on XXXX

I look forward to speaking with you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Sample Letter

Dear xxxxx

I am applying for the position of xxxxxxxxxxxx, as advertised in xxxxxxxx. With over five years experience in xxx and a strong educational background in xxxxxxxx, I believe I could make a significant contribution in helping xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

As an example of my most recent accomplishments, I designed and implemented xxxxxxxxxxxx that significantly increased xxxxxxxxxxxx, in turn, significantly raised the level of customer satisfaction with the service provided. I believe that my expertise in these areas would be of particular value in meeting the challenges of this position.

The enclosed CV summarises the full range of my skills and qualifications. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this opportunity and my qualifications in more detail and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Links to cover letter writing techniques with sample letters:

<http://www.seekingsuccess.com/articles/art158.php3>

<http://jobsmart.org/tools/resume/cletters.cfm>

<http://resume.monster.com/articles/letterthatsell/>

<http://resume.monster.com/articles/sample/>

http://www.jobweb.com/Resources/Library/Interviews_Resumes/Sample_Cover_Letter_146_01.htm

Links to articles on cover letters:

Cold Cover Letters by *Kim Isaacs*. Monster Resume Expert

<http://resume.monster.com/articles/cold/>

Cover Letter Do's and Don'ts by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D. and Katharine Hansen

http://www.quintcareers.com/cover_letter-dos-donts.html

Cover Letter Success is All About Specifics, by *Katharine Hansen*

http://www.quintcareers.com/cover_letter_success.html

Can I Use a Stock Cover Letter? by *Barbara Reinhold* Monster Career Coach.

<http://resume.monster.com/articles/coverletter/>

Sample Dynamic Cover Letters from *quintessential careers.com*

http://www.quintcareers.com/cover_letter_samples.html

Ten Cover Letter Don'ts by *Kim Isaacs* Monster Resume Expert

<http://resume.monster.com/articles/donot/> .

The Basics of a Dynamic Cover Letter. by Katharine Hansen and Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D. Note: This article is excerpted from the 3rd edition of *Dynamic Cover Letters*.

http://www.quintcareers.com/cover_letter_basics.html

The *Dynamic Cover Letters* Formula for Job-Search Success by Katharine Hansen and Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D

http://www.quintcareers.com/cover_letters.html

The Ten Most Frequently Asked Questions About Cover Letters, By *Katharine Hansen*.

<http://www.quintcareers.com/edge.html>

Tips for a Dynamic Email Cover Letter by *Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.*

http://www.quintcareers.com/email_cover_letters.html

Tips For Writing Cover Letters By Leslie Plotkin

http://www.worktree.com/tb/CL_tips.cfm