

Vista Adult Education

Supporting Documents: Cover Letters, References, & Thank You Letters

2008-2009

COVER LETTERS

- Writing an effective cover letter is extremely important. The same as with your application and resume, your cover letter is not only a place to further discuss your skills, experiences, and desires, but it also is used as an example of your work.
- A cover letter serves three functions:
 1. It tells how you heard of the opening and why you are interested.
 2. It tells your strengths and qualifications for the position.
 3. It thanks the employer and requests an interview.
- It is important to never repeat what is on your resume. The cover letter should have new or additional information about yourself, of course, information that is relevant to the job.
- Many employers never read the cover letter. However, it is expected that a cover letter will accompany the resume. What is more, the cover letter lets the employers know that you are a professional who is serious about obtaining employment!

HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER (for a job opening that is advertised)

First Paragraph:

1. Name the job for which you are applying (include job code number if listed).
2. Tell how you learned about the job (i.e. job board, internet, classified newspaper, etc.).

Second Paragraph:

1. Emphasize skills or abilities you have that *relate* to the job for which you are applying.
2. If you have relevant work experience or education, be sure to point it out, but DO NOT reiterate your entire resume.
3. Explain why you are interested in working for this employer.
4. Be sure to communicate confidence.
5. Remember that the reader will view your letter as an example of your writing skills.
6. The information in this paragraph must convince the reader that you are skilled and qualified for the position and that you are the best candidate.

Third Paragraph:

1. This is the concluding paragraph of your letter.
2. Push for an interview by saying, “looking forward to setting up an interview to further discuss my qualifications for the _____ position” or “I will contact you in the next week to schedule an interview.”
3. It is important to be assertive, but not to the point that you will become an annoyance to the employer. Rely on your instincts!!
4. End the letter by thanking the employer.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER
(for a job opening that is advertised)

May 15, 2000

Mrs. Francie Miller
Royal Industries
1234 Princess Ann Drive
Vallejo, CA 95064

Dear Mrs. Miller,

It is with great interest and enthusiasm that I am applying for the assistant sales position (Job Code 345656) as advertised in the Union Tribune.

I have acquired excellent retail/merchandising skills in a class I recently completed by the Los Angeles County Regional Occupational Program (ROP). I believe the hands-on experience I received will be of particular interest to you. I have enclosed my resume and a copy of my ROP certificate for your examination.

I have always enjoyed the Royal Industries fashion line and hope that you can use someone with my particular background, skills, and abilities. I will telephone your secretary next week and if possible, arrange a personal interview.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy Marcela

Enclosure: Resume
ROP Certificate

HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER **(for a job when there is no job advertised)**

First Paragraph:

1. Introduce yourself and explain the type of position you are interested in and why you are choosing to send your resume to this particular organization.
2. If you were recommended by an employee to send your resume, make sure you state that “_____ recommended you to send your resume.”

Second Paragraph:

1. Emphasize skills or abilities you have that *relate* to the type of position that you would like to have.
2. If you have relevant work experience or education, be sure to point it out, but DO NOT reiterate your entire resume.
3. Be sure to communicate confidence.
4. Remember that the reader will view your letter as an example of your writing skills.
5. The information in this paragraph must convince the reader that if and when a job opening becomes available, you are skilled and qualified for the position and that you are the best candidate.

Third Paragraph:

1. This is the concluding paragraph of your letter.
2. Emphasize your desire to work for this particular organization and request that you be called should an opening become available.
3. Indicate that you may be following up in the next few weeks just to determine if any job openings may have become available.
4. It is important to be assertive, but not to the point that you will become an annoyance to the employer. Rely on your instincts!!
5. End the letter by thanking the employer.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER
(for a job when there is no job advertised)

May 15, 2000

Ms. Lenora Phillips
Director of Personnel
LEO Architects, Inc.
88533 N. Arbor Drive
San Diego, CA 94334

Dear Ms. Phillips,

I am interested in exploring career opportunities with your company as an Office Manager or Administrative Assistant. I am extremely interested in putting my skills to work in an arts or architectural environment.

For the past five years, I have been employed as an administrative assistant working for three executives. I have used word processing programs to prepare construction bids and status reports. I have excellent communication and organizational skills, and I am a team player who can work with others to accomplish tasks efficiently.

I am looking for a position of responsibility where I can contribute to your organization. Please contact me if you have an opening that might fit my qualifications. I can be reached at (760) 758-7122 or sbishop@yahoo.com. Thank you for your interest and consideration.

Sincerely,

Shawna Bishop

SAMPLE COVER LETTER (Return to Workforce)

September 25, 2000

Ms. Lisa Cooper, RN, Head Nurse
Atlanta Medical Complex
7987 Medical Lane
Atlanta, GA 30454

Dear Ms. Cooper:

I have returned home! After 25 years of living in Florida, I have returned home to spend the second half of my life where it all began. I am presently exploring nursing positions at Atlanta Medical Complex and have enclosed a resume for your review.

I worked here in the 1960's. I left on great terms, have outstanding references, and would love to come back and conclude my career where I started.

As you see from my resume, I have not formally worked in the past 24 months. I have spent time with my children and grandchildren, traveled a bit with my semi-retired husband. In addition, I have taken advantage of my free time to take a number of continuing education courses to improve my skills for 21st-century America-including computer courses, Advanced Nursing Techniques (JFK Medical Center), and other personal development-related workshops and seminars.

Now back in Georgia, I am seeking part-time employment. I am flexible as to the shifts and days I can work, and would like to find a position that would allow me to work about 40 hours a week. I have excellent letters of reference from my years in Florida, in addition to the fine reputation I left behind when Georgia some 25 years ago.

I will stop by your office next Tuesday between 2PM and 3PM to fill out your formal application. If you can take a few moments to see me at that time, I would be very grateful. I will call you on Monday to see if this can be arranged.

Thank you for your attention. I am excited about the possibility of returning to Atlanta Medical Complex.

Sincerely,

Nancy R. Drew

REFERENCES

Recommendations carry great weight in the employment world. Here's a checklist to help you get the most mileage from your references:

- Do not list references on your resume. If you send out 100 resumes and each reference is contacted every time you are considered for a job, you may wear out your welcome.
- Always check with your references before you release their names to an interviewer. It's a good idea to sit down with a former supervisor and ask how they would describe your abilities to a potential employer.
- Honesty is always the best policy. If you prefer that a past or current employer not be contacted, be prepared to explain why. Be prepared to supply other references. While verbal recommendations provide the best method of determining a candidate's potential, a well-written letter of recommendation that clearly outlines an individual's abilities can also be helpful.
- Peers and subordinates may be used as references if you are applying for a managerial position. They can provide insight on your interpersonal skills and management abilities.
- When you receive a bad reference, go back to past supervisors to ask where you went wrong. Or you could eliminate that reference from your list.
- Never ask a friend or relative to pretend that he/she was your supervisor. This type of data is easily verifiable.
- You should never burn your bridges! Maintaining good relationships with former employers will be helpful for future references.

Example of References

References

Jose Smith
Manager
Christine Industries
305 E. Bobier Drive
Vista, CA 92084
(760) 555 – 5555

John Doe
Supervisor
Blackguard Inc.
305 E. Bobier Drive
Vista, CA 92084
(760) 555 - 5555

Pat Market
Coordinator
Jumpyard Inc.
305 E. Bobier Drive
Vista, CA 92084
(760) 555 - 5555

REFERENCE WORKSHEET

DIRECTIONS: References are people who know you personally and are willing to verify your abilities, skills and attitudes. Be sure to contact the references before you put their names on an application and ask if they are willing to write a letter of reference. Also, be sure to keep a copy for your personal employment portfolio. References should be 18 years old and not be a relative. A teacher, counselor, neighbor, or clergy person would be a good reference. Most employers require at least 3 references. Collect your information and complete the worksheet below:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ # of years acquainted _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ # of years acquainted _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ # of years acquainted _____

THANK YOU LETTERS

- A thank you letter is an important part of the interview.
- You are thanking the interviewer for taking the time out of their busy schedule to meet with you.
- A thank you letter is also your last effort to remind the interviewer why you are the best candidate.
- In the thank you letter, it is always a nice touch to summarize what was discussed in the interview or to point out a positive aspect that you learned about the company.
- Be sure to send the thank you letter immediately after the interview!
- Be sure to collect the interviewer's card so you have the correct spelling of the name, job title, and address.
- A hand written thank you card is usually best. However, if the company is going to be making a decision immediately, you can send out a thank you email and then follow-up with a hand written thank you card.

THANK YOU LETTER SAMPLE

December 20, 2008

John Mason
Vice President
Orco Agency
305 E. Bobier Drive
Vista, CA 92048

Dear Mr. Mason:

It was very enjoyable to speak with you about the assistant account executive position at the Orco Agency. The job, as you presented it, seems to be a very good match for my skills and interests. The creative approach to account management that you described confirmed my desire to work with you.

In addition to my enthusiasm, I will bring to the position strong writing skills, assertiveness and the ability to encourage others to work cooperatively with the department. My artistic background will help me to work with artists on staff and provide me with an understanding of the visual aspects of our work.

I understand your need for administrative support. My detail orientation and organizational skills will help to free you to deal with larger issues. I neglected to mention during my interview that I had worked for two summers as a temporary office worker. This experience helped me to develop my secretarial and clerical skills.

I appreciate the time you took to interview me. I am very interested in working for you and look forward to hearing from you about this position.

Sincerely,

Betty Smith