

## COVER LETTERS

A cover letter should accompany each resume that is sent (i.e. emailed, snail mailed, or online application). Cover letters can personalize your application, sometimes making the difference between getting an interview or not. Since the person reviewing resumes likely reads many letters every day, you should be direct, courteous and brief. Although cover letters are customized to each employer/job, it is common to recycle paragraphs or ideas you wish to convey in all your letters. Be sure to address each letter to the hiring manager in the department you wish to work. Never state "To Whom it May Concern" or "Dear Madam or Sir". If you cannot locate their name, use "Dear Art Director" or "Human Resource Manager," but only as a last resort.

### GUIDELINES FOR THE COVER LETTER

#### **First Paragraph:** *WHY YOU ARE WRITING?*

In your initial paragraph, state why you are writing the letter, name the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and indicate from which resource (career center, website, friend, or employment service) you learned of the opening. Highlight your basic skills or experience that relates to the job described.

#### **Second Paragraph:** *WHY YOU? -- HOW ARE YOU QUALIFIED?*

Indicate why you are interested in the position, the organization, its products or services- and above all *what you can do for the employer*. If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have some practical work experience, point out your specific achievements or unique accomplishments. Try not to repeat the same information found on your resume. Attempt to identify what the potential employer is looking for and describe your abilities, skills and accomplishments as they relate to the job.

#### **Third Paragraph:** *WHY THEM?*

The cover letter should also reflect your knowledge and understanding of the organization. Know who they are and what they do. Add a few lines to demonstrate that you've done your homework and connect how you would be a good fit for their organization.

#### **Fourth Paragraph:** *ASK FOR THE INTERVIEW.*

In the closing paragraph, indicate your desire for a personal interview. Close your letter with a statement or question, which will encourage a response. Thank them for their time and consideration.

**SAMPLE COVER LETTER:**

JQ College  
Purchase, NY | (914) 251- 1000 | [jcollege@mail.com](mailto:jcollege@mail.com)

Ms. Maggie Zine  
WESTY Magazine  
500 Broadway  
White Plains, NY 10605

Today's Date

Dear Ms. Maggie Zine:

I am applying for the position of Retail Relations Coordinator with WESTY Magazine that was posted on Purchase JobScore, Month/ Year. As a student graduating from Purchase College in mid-May, I am very interested in pursuing a career in the promotions and marketing industry.

While taking classes in Journalism and interning at The Journal News, I saw the importance of a well-run promotions department. As the Assistant to the Marketing Director, I assisted in compiling the "Know Westchester" special addition where I contacted potential advertisers and helped them decide what size advertisements to place. At my previous position, I served as Editor of my college publication "The Beat". My activities within this position included selecting which stories to cover, writing and assisting with news coverage and overseeing the advertising and printing staff. I believe my skills and experience could easily be applied to your publication.

I have been an avid reader of Westy Magazine and I have been continually impressed by the way the magazine has evolved to remain on the cutting edge of the industry. I am aware that you recently expanded internationally; my coursework in Language and Culture has provided me with cultural insight and understanding to contribute to your global efforts.

Attached is my resume for your review. I look forward to hearing from you and to learn more about your opportunity. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
*Your Signature*  
Joe College