

Cover letter Guide

What is A Cover Letter?

A cover letter is a document that is generally sent with your resume to provide additional information about your skills and experience. It is essentially a tailored, supporting document that provides detailed information on why you are qualified for the job that you are applying for. Think of it as a bridge between your experience and the job description, you are building that bridge using specific examples and details from your experience to show how you are a qualified candidate for the role. Therefore, a cover letter should always be tailored and customized to the position you are applying to.

Structure of a cover letter:

Header

- You can choose to place your address on top of your cover letter (center aligned) or right above the date (left aligned). Your identifying information can also have the same formatting as the top of your resume.
- Provide the current date and full address listed for the organization.

Opening

- Always address your letter to a specific person using the appropriate salutation, for example, “Dear Mr. Buffet,” in the opening of your cover letter.
- Research the company to find the appropriate contact, if it is not listed in the job description. Use a generic greeting such as “Dear Hiring Manager” if you are unable to find the contact’s name. Try to avoid using “To Whom It May Concern” as the opening of your cover letter.

First Paragraph

- This paragraph serves as the intent of your letter. Be specific; state the position you are applying for, department and the organization name, and reference the position number/Job ID, if given.
- Provide a brief description of your expertise and what you can contribute to the position.

Second/Third Paragraph

- Use these paragraphs to demonstrate your qualifications using specific examples as related to the job description.
- Elaborate on your accomplishments that clearly portray your fit for the role you are applying for. Use the STAR (**S**ituation **T**ask **A**ction **R**esult) method to communicate your accomplishments within your professional experiences. Do not include everything that is listed on your resume; the cover letter supplements your resume, highlighting your special qualities and elaborating on relevant experience to persuade an employer to contact you. Keep it oriented to the employer’s needs.
- Remember to include key words from the position description since scanning software may be used for an initial review.

Closing

- Express your excitement about the position, reaffirming your interest and qualifications for the desired position.
- Highlight your research on the company and their mission and tie this into your expertise.
- Remember to thank them for their time and state your enthusiasm for future discussions.

Student Name

55 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10030
(555) 555-5555 | studentname@sph.cuny.edu

March 20, 2015

Health Research Incorporated
150 Broadway, Suite 560
New York, New York 10010

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to express my interest in applying for Research Scientist II position at Health Research Incorporated, posted on CUNY School of Public Health Employment Connection. Having garnered experience in conducting a variety of health research activities in diverse settings during the course of my Master's degree in Epidemiology, I am excited by the opportunity to join your institution as a Research Scientist.

I have a passion for health promotion, especially through population based research and this inspired my interest in pursuing a career in Public Health. Infectious disease epidemiology, which is the major focal research area at Health Research Incorporated, is also one of my key areas of interest. I had the opportunity to work with related projects as a Research Assistant, and take infectious disease courses, during my Master's program in Epidemiology. I conducted various data management and surveillance activities for a "Bill and Melinda Gates" funded project involving the development of an electronic surveillance system for monitoring childhood pneumonia incidence in Ethiopia. I worked on prototype testing of health kiosks, modification of electronic forms, developing training modules on e-health systems, and conducting training of field data collectors. I have also worked with several research teams in the design and implementation of similar health projects in New York, India and Nigeria. These experiences have helped refine my analytical and evaluation skills in Public Health interventions in diverse settings, while providing platforms for me to engage collaboratively with diverse stakeholders in the community and industry at large.

I am excited at the opportunity to utilize my expertise in conducting surveillance activities and observational studies on the various infectious disease interventions that Health Research Incorporated is currently focused on. The dynamic and diverse environment at Health Research Incorporated provides an ideal platform for me to hone my expertise, while promoting their mission of advancing healthcare globally. I tenaciously await the privilege to work with your team. I am also very committed to continuing my contributions to developing efficient evidence-based interventions for improving health in global settings. I would appreciate the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications for the Research Scientist position and look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Student Name