

## **BUSINESS STUDENTS' GUIDE TO COVER LETTERS**

### Purpose:

- To serve as a business transmittal letter for your resume
- To introduce you and your employment credentials to the employer
- To generate employer interest in interviewing you

### Employer Perspective:

- Hiring manager will give the cover letter a cursory glance and first concentrate on the resume. The resume details the specifics of the candidate's background and qualifications and is compared to the manager's specific requirements. If there is a match, the cover letter is looked at fully.
- When reading the cover letter, the employment manager will usually look to see if it is a generic cover letter or if it is specific/personal to the company. They may look closer at the ones who have a connection to that company (i.e. referral, networking event at college). Career services sponsors many employer related events (information sessions, career fairs) that you should be able to say something like, "I met you at the Job Jamboree at the University of Delaware in September and I walked away even more excited about your company and position".
- The employer is looking for specific qualifications that match the industry and position. Be sure that you address the qualifications of the job description in the body of your cover letter. If they are looking for someone who is creative, has good communication and organizational skills, then you need to be sure that you address those skills in your cover letter.

### Content of a Cover Letter:

Regardless of what type of cover letter you are writing, the basic format is the same. Use the formula below as a general guideline for all cover letters.

#### I. Opening paragraph

- Expresses your interest in the organization and focuses on it
- Tells where you heard about the organization or position
- Demonstrates your knowledge of the organization or field

#### II. Body

- Highlights a few major skill sets with examples to prove you possess that skill
- Focuses on you
- Illustrates how your qualifications match their needs

#### III. Closing

- Summarizes how you would fit the organization
- Requests action. Asks for an interview or an application
- Suggests a date that you will call to follow up (be sure to follow up)

### Additional Tips:

- Make an appointment with your career advisor to look over your cover letter.
- Make sure it is error proof (grammar, spelling, sentence structure)
- Be concise and use specific examples.

## Bad Cover Letters:

A cover letter can be useless if it:

- Is poorly written with weak sentence structure and poor grammar.
- Contains misspelled words or typographical errors.
- Is boring to read.
- Contains sexist, condescending or discriminatory statements.
- Fails to address the reader personally or focus on his/her needs.

## Examples of Bad Cover Letters:

Dear Sirs:

Please consider this as my letter of application for the position of \_\_\_\_\_. I have a bachelor's degree in history and I have worked every summer as a painter for C & D Painting Company. I have enclosed a copy of my resume and will be glad to send a copy of my reference letters upon request. For personal reasons, however, I will respectfully request that you not contact C & D Painters.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

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To Whom It May Concern:

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the spring of hope, the winter of despair, we had everything before us...". This quote from Charles Dickens captures the essence of the business world today. We are presented with opportunities for growth and a lot of decisions need to be made which will affect all of our futures. To deal with these choices, help is often needed. This is why I would like to work for your company.

I have enclosed a copy of my resume which highlights my skills and experiences. I believe your management training position is the challenge and opportunity which I am looking for in my career. I am confident I would be an asset to your company. Your consideration of my resume would be greatly appreciated.

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Dear Ms. Smith:

I am interested in applying for your management training program. I graduated from College USA with a degree in Economics. I have done a lot of public speaking and I have written many papers which demonstrate my strong communication skills. I am good at dealing with people and I am a hard worker.

I should like to be considered a candidate for management training position in your company. Though I have no previous working experience in a company such as yours or in the position advertised, my excellent organizational skills and enthusiasm will more than make up for my lack of experience. Enclosed please find a current resume.

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Job Skills Checklist:

**Purpose:** The purpose of this skills inventory is to help you to be able to come up with different skills that you may be having a hard time thinking of yourself.

**How to use the Skills Inventory:** The following is a sample list of skills found in a cross section of careers. Circle every skill that applies to you. Jot down examples of situations in your working life that demonstrate this skill. Then try to incorporate these skills into your resume and/or cover letter.

administering programs	planning agendas/meetings	setting up demonstrations
advising people	planning organizational needs	writing reports
analyzing data	predicting futures	writing for publication
auditing financial reports	organizing tasks	checking for accuracy
budgeting expenses	prioritizing work	classifying records
calculating numerical data	creating new ideas	coaching individuals
finding information	meeting people	collecting money
handling complaints	evaluating programs	compiling statistics
handling detail work	editing work	inventing new ideas
imagining new solutions	coping with deadlines	proposing ideas
negotiating/arbitrating conflicts	promoting events	dramatizing ideas
speaking to the public	raising funds	estimating physical space
writing letters/papers/proposals	questioning others	organizing files
reading volumes of material	being thorough	selling products
listening to others	running meetings	teaching/instructing/training individuals
relating to the public	supervising employees	delegating responsibility
entertaining people	enduring long hours	persuading others
deciding uses of money	displaying artistic ideas	summarizing information
counseling/consulting people	managing an organization	comparing results
operating equipment	motivating others	comprehending ideas
determining a problem	reporting information	generating accounts
collaborating ideas	defining a problem	making decisions
overseeing operations	administering medication	selling ideas
teaching/instructing/training individuals	motivating others	conducting interviews
analyzing problems	thinking in a logical manner	setting priorities
preparing written communications	recommending courses of action	gathering information
setting work/committee goals	expressing ideas orally to individuals or groups	providing discipline when necessary
taking personal responsibility	conducting meetings	meeting new people
maintaining a high level of activity	developing plans for projects	picking out important information
developing a climate of enthusiasm, teamwork, and cooperation	thinking of creative ideas	enforcing rules and regulations
interacting with people at different levels		

888 Glenbrook Road  
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

September 27, 2007

Ms. Jenna Kelly  
College Relations Manager  
ABC Consulting  
25 127<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 22122

Dear Ms. Kelly:

I was given your name by Michelle Geller, a marketing professor at the University of Delaware, who told me about the Marketing Associate position with ABC Consulting. As the third largest consulting firm in the industry and on *Fortune's* top 100 places to launch a career in 2010, ABC Consulting can offer me opportunities that far surpasses those I would be given at a smaller company. I feel my experiences and education make me an ideal candidate for this position.

As a senior, marketing major with additional coursework in finance and economics, I feel my academic background fits well with the nature of your work. I was an active leader in many of my upper level business projects and took advantage of every opportunity to learn about international markets. This past summer I interned at Morgan Stanley and was exposed to many areas of client services. This experience enabled me to understand marketing and consulting strategies as well as being a contributing member of some major team projects. These experiences, in and out the classroom, have solidified my interest in an organization like ABC Consulting.

My resume demonstrates a high level of involvement outside the classroom at University of Delaware. I have been an active participant and have taken on leadership in many of my volunteer activities. Leading a major fund raising campaign for my fraternity and being a committee leader for Special Olympics have been highlights for me. My involvements at the University of Delaware, as well as holding a part-time position throughout college convey a strong work ethic and boundless energy. After graduation, I would like to continue my strong performance with ABC Consulting.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my candidacy in more detail. Please contact me by phone or email if you need any additional information.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Matthew Murphy  
Enclosure

## COLLIN M. NEWMAN

1 Haines Street ~ Newark, De 19702 ~ 555-333-5313 ~ collinnew@xxx.com

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December 29, 2009

Ms. Alison Parsells  
Tipton Communications  
220 Continental Drive  
Suite 211  
Newark, DE 19713

Dear Ms. Parsells:

I am formally applying for the Spring Public Relations Intern position with Tipton Communications. I discovered the position posted on the University of Delaware's Blue Hen Jobs website. Tipton Communications is a company in which I can produce results because I identify with the company's passionate strategy of doing whatever it takes to succeed. Whether it is to perfect employee communication, or master publications and graphic design, I am more than capable of helping the company stay true to its mission.

As a senior, marketing major, I feel my educational background and experiences combine for a good fit for Tipton. I took on many leadership positions in group projects throughout my upper level marketing courses. This past November, I attended the 53rd Annual Advertising Career Conference in New York City hosted by the AWPY and was exposed to insight from top industry figureheads on the industry and its direction. During the summer of 2009, I interned at MTV Networks/Viacom in the Digital Ad Sales department, in which I researched sellable opportunities, maintained information on corporate accounts, and networked with countless professionals. These experiences have combined to validate my true interest in the industry and in an organization like Tipton Communications.

I have been active in many extracurricular activities at the University of Delaware, as indicated by my resume. Leading an online magazine at the university and taking control of its promotional operations has been a very rewarding experience for me. I have also taken part in an endeavor called B.L.U.E. Advertising in which we act as our own advertising and consulting firm for on-campus organizations. My high involvement at school and my incredible experiences in the industry have made me a determined and focused worker who will work hard for success.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my candidacy for this position in greater detail. Please contact my phone or email if you need any additional information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Collin Newman  
Enclosure

15 Linden St.  
Boston, MA 01999

February 1, 2010

Ms. Elissa Badean  
Bloomberg L.P.  
731 Lexington Avenue  
New York, NY 10022

Dear Ms. Badean:

Bloomberg L.P. has been a part of my undergraduate coursework since the spring of 2008, when the Exelon Trading Center was built at the University of Delaware. My interest in the firm, however, began when I learned of your company's interactive work environment and unique culture. It appears that Bloomberg provides an enthusiastic atmosphere for new entrants to learn the facets of the industry. Your firm's fast-paced and team environment is one I foresee myself excelling in. Because of this, I very much hope to be considered for a position in the 2010 Sales & Analytics Training Program.

I am currently a senior at the University of Delaware and will be graduating this coming May with a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance. Throughout college, I have honed my skills through challenging coursework, several jobs, a professional internship, study abroad experience and extracurricular activities. My experience highlights my ability to adapt to different environments and work with various teams and clients. I have developed valuable multi-tasking and communication skills which make working in fast paced, interactive atmospheres exciting. I am enthusiastic in my hopes to further this development with a career at Bloomberg L.P.

My included resume further outlines my education, skills and experiences. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my potential role at Bloomberg. Please contact me by phone (555-500-2796) or by way of email (sburke@xxx.edu) if you would like any additional information.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Shannon Burke

150 Main Street  
Newark, DE 19711

November 29, 2009

Strategic Diagnostics  
111 Pencader Drive  
Newark, DE 19702

To Whom It May Concern:

I am excited at the opportunity to work for a company with a focus on innovation such as Strategic Diagnostics. Your goal of providing new products and services to effectively solve customers' current and future analytical problems is something I admire. Additionally, your ability to use the technical expertise of your staff in a variety of markets shows the versatility of your methods. Moreover, your strong position in the market and the contributions you make toward the success of your customers is commendable.

Classes taken during my undergraduate studies such as Analysis of Operations Problems and Quality Control, have given me a better understanding of the analysis necessary in improving business processes and products. Through the study of Six Sigma, Lean productions, Simulations, and Dynamic Programming, I have developed a basic knowledge of the techniques used in analyzing problems faced by businesses. I was able to apply those skills and gained a global perspective during my time studying abroad in Australia, New Zealand, and Hong Kong. It was enlightening to notice how a slight change in environment altered the business procedures of the various companies I analyzed.

My leadership roles in various clubs while at the University of Delaware have helped to provide me with the communication and management skills required to successfully work with others in a team environment. As President of Silver Wings, a volunteer organization, I was responsible for organizing and running meetings as well as working with the other officers to develop and execute charity events throughout the year.

I am eager to apply the skills and experience that I have acquired both in and out of the classroom and to grow as a professional with Strategic Diagnostics. I have included my resume and look forward to exploring career opportunities with you. Thank you for your consideration.

All the best,

Brianna Lespinasse

3 Pendfield Road  
Robbins NJ 08888  
Home: 555-267-9838 / Cell: 555-267-3226  
Email: manuel@xxx.edu

October 5, 2009

Ms. Sue Knittel  
Grant Thornton  
2001 Market Street, Suite 3100  
Philadelphia PA, 19101

Dear Ms. Knittel,

I am a junior, currently attending the University of Delaware, interested in interviewing for a summer internship within the Grant Thornton Audit Services. I have always been interested in accounting, and I think working within the Auditing Services Department of a highly respected firm would be a stimulating experience. I became extremely interested in Grant Thornton and the possibility of summer internships, after I attended a "Meet the Firms" event at my University. After a discussion with Brandon O'Toole about your company's size, environment, and internship experience I knew that Grant Thornton would be a great fit for me. I would love the opportunity to learn and contribute to your company.

I began my studies at the University of Delaware as a computer engineer. Combining the difficult curriculum with an illness in the family, my GPA suffered. Since switching over to the business program, my GPA has continued to improve and will continue to improve. My recent GPA is a much better reflection of my work ethic.

In attending the University of Delaware, I have been able to continue acquiring different skills that would allow me to be an asset to your company. My accounting classes have allowed me to gain a greater appreciation for the work and efforts that coincide with auditing and financial statements. I am a hard working individual and I take pride in what I perform. I am the Retreat Coordinator for my fraternity, where I get to plan brotherhood events for nearly 100 members. Planning and coordinating weekend-long events for such a large group requires organization and time management, which are both skills I possess. I also am the CAP Chair for my fraternity, in which I manage and communicate events for fraternity members for campus activities that involve diversity, career development, volunteer work, safety, and responsibility around the University. Afterwards I document and present our fraternity's participation to our college administration to be recognized in an award system.

I have previously interned for an injection molding company that designed molds for different companies to go into their assembly lines. I was able to get a good idea of how a business operates and how to maintain a high level of professionalism in the office. Working as a lifeguard for the past three years has improved my awareness, responsibility, and preparedness. As a lifeguard one must be personable since there is constant communication with many different types of people.

I am looking forward to the opportunity of a personal interview within Grant Thornton. Please feel free to contact me at 555.267.3226 should you have any questions regarding my qualifications. I truly believe that I will be a great fit in Grant Thornton. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Manuel Tanner

Rebecca Thomas  
23 W. Main Street  
Newark, DE 19711  
Cell (268) 555-9557  
beckyt@xxx.com

April 28, 2010

Julie Andrews  
ABC Marketing  
1440 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 15236

Dear Ms. Andrews,

Please consider my resume for the Marketing Director position that was recently advertised on the ABC Marketing website. I believe that my academic background and experience working with corporate executives in the marketing industry, combined with my knowledge of promotional marketing strategies, comply with the requirements outlined in the job description.

During the past six years, I have had the opportunity of owning and operating my own Marketing Agency. As an entrepreneur, I have developed a strong understanding of the principles and elements needed to produce the best products, while creating and capitalizing on top notch branding. Cultivating professional relationships has always been important to me and I am equally at ease communicating with senior management or with vendors and contractors. When organizing events, I am project driven and strive to inspire the best job performance possible from associates and employees.

With more than 8 years overall experience, I have developed a diverse repertoire of skills that includes specialization in promotional marketing, branding, strategic planning and retail merchandising. My business began as a promotional modeling agency that provided experienced professional models for various sporting events, entertainment gatherings and business promotions. In addition to the coordination and planning of events, I diversified and began acquiring contract-marketing work with numerous companies and businesses including beverage outlets, cosmetic agencies, sports agents, boutique owners and corporate executives. I assisted with media buying/planning, direct marketing initiatives, product and package development, research, and client restructuring.

I am passionate about my work and always strive to exceed my personal goals and client expectations. I continue to build upon my organizational skills and thrive at multi-tasking. Personal strengths in accounting have always been an asset, but my ability to communicate effectively in a business or social environment have influenced career decisions throughout my marketing experience. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss in further detail my qualifications for this position. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Thomas