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SECTION 1

COVER LETTER

What is a cover letter?
The cover letter introduces you and your resume. It is a marketing tool to sell your candidacy for a job by highlighting aspects of your background that relate to a particular position. A carefully crafted cover letter complements your resume and may provide a brief summary, however the focus is on employer needs. It is necessary to send both a resume and a cover letter each time you contact a potential employer.

What is the purpose of a cover letter?
The purpose of the cover letter is to obtain an interview. It conveys your qualifications for the position, how well you communicate and your interest and enthusiasm in working for the organization. Qualifications that match specific job requirements are emphasized in the cover letter as contrasted to a complete picture of your background that is shown on the resume. It is also a sample of your written communication skills and additionally, can explain red flags on your resume such as gaps in work history.

What are the components of a cover letter?
A good cover letter generally includes three paragraphs and meets three criteria.

The criteria:
- Captures the reader’s attention
- Sells the potential employee
- Stimulates action (to interview you for the position)

The paragraphs:
- Introductory — mention the position and how you heard about it
- Body — sell your qualifications and interest
- Closing — take initiative to follow up and invite to contact you

The body of the letter is the most important section as it gives the employer reasons why they should consider you for an interview! It should include an overview of your strengths and qualifications as they relate to the targeted position. Include examples of your accomplishments if possible. These can be bulleted for increased emphasis. For example:

*I am very interested in the Office Manager position as my experience and career goals correlate directly with your requirements. Specifically, my background includes:*

- Five years experience managing satellite offices with six employees
- Computer and office administration skills
- Exceptional organization and communication skills
COVER LETTER (continued)

**Cardinal Rules on Content**
- Research the company and learn as much as you can about the position. (You can often check the organization’s website to gain good information.)
- Target the letter to the specific position and organization.
- Write from the employers’ perspective and focus on employer needs.
- Address the cover letter to a specific individual within the organization. (Example: Mr. John Brown, Manager)
- Keep your salary options open. If it is absolutely required (meaning that your resume will not be accepted without mentioning your salary history or requirements), provide a *range* if possible.

**Font**
- Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri or Courier font suggested.
- Use 10-12-point font.
- When attaching a letter to on-line application, sign letter using a cursive-looking font.
- Sign the letter with black or blue ink if hand delivering.

**Format**
- Use block letter format.
- Margins should be at least 1 inch from top; other three sides a minimum of ½ inch and a maximum of 1.25 inches.
- You may follow the name and address with a reference to the position. (Example: Subject: Marketing Assistant position)
- Single space paragraphs; double space between each paragraph.

**Check letter for errors**
- Proofread your letter before you send it.
- Have at least two others proofread it as well.
- There should be NO errors of any kind.

**Submitting/Sending the Letter and Resume**
- Most employers will ask you to attach your document(s) or copy and paste it into a designated space during the on-line application process.
- If you choose to send through the mail or hand deliver, mail in a 9 x 12 envelope or tri-fold in a business-sized envelope. Be sure to include your resume.
- Do not staple or paper clip the cover letter to the resume.
June 1, 20XX

Mr./Ms./Mrs./Dr. First and Last Name
Position Title
Company Name
Address, Suite
City, State, Zip Code

Subject: Marketing Assistant position (Note: The subject line is optional)

Dear Mr./Ms./Mrs./Dr. Last Name:

I am interested in applying for the Marketing Assistant position that was recently advertised in the Kansas City Star. This position correlates very closely with my training and experience as an intern at Planter and Alwaysgreen, where I worked in a team environment to develop a greenhouse advertising campaign.

I have a degree in Marketing and Management, which has prepared me to handle a variety of responsibilities in the marketing field, and I received an award for a promotion brochure created for a class project. I can contribute energy and ideas to a marketing team, and I possess excellent communication skills.

Attached is my resume. I welcome the opportunity to interview with you and further discuss my qualifications. If you need additional information, please contact me at (913) 555-5555. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sign your name

Type your First and Last Name
PROSPECTING LETTER

A prospecting letter, also known as a letter of interest, is sent to prospective employers that may be hiring, but haven't yet listed a specific job opening. It can be organized as follows:

**Introduction paragraph**

Because this letter is being sent to an organization that has not announced specific job openings, you need to get the attention of the employer by showing how your strongest work skills could benefit the organization. You can also emphasize specific reasons you would like to work for their company.

**Body paragraph**

Give supporting evidence of the top selling points you listed in the introduction paragraph. Show how your studies and work experience have prepared you for the job area. Highlight your experience and personal qualities that may correlate to needs of the company.

**Closing paragraph**

Ask for an opportunity to interview. Provide follow-up information as well as how the company can contact you.
June 1, 20XX

Ms. Carol Patrick  
General Manager  
Wal-Mart  
13555 Santa Fe Drive  
Olathe, KS 66062

Dear Ms. Patrick:

Do you want retail clerks and managers who are accurate, enthusiastic, and experienced? Additionally, do you want someone who cares about customer service, who understands merchandising, and who can work well with others to get the job done? When you are ready to hire a manager trainee or a clerk with a strong work ethic and dedication to superior customer service, please consider me for the position.

Working as a clerk and then as an assistant department manager in a large department store has taught me how challenging a career in retailing can be. My Associates of Arts degree in retail will provide your store with a well-rounded potential employee. I can offer Wal-Mart’s Olathe store more than my two years of study and field experience. You will find that I am interested in every facet of retailing and eager to take on responsibility. Please review my resume to see how my skills can benefit your store.

I understand that Wal-Mart prefers to promote its managers from within the company, and I would be pleased to start out with an entry-level position until I gain the necessary experience. Please contact me to discuss my qualifications in more detail. I can be reached at 913.555.5555. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jean Claude Cavalier

Jean Claude Cavalier
THANK YOU LETTER

Do I need to write one?

Yes! It is very important to write a thank you letter following an interview as a sign of professional courtesy and to remind the interviewer about your interest. Be sure to request a business card from an interviewer before you leave an interview so that you have an address and/or email address to send a thank you.

When and how should I send a thank you letter?

You should send a thank you letter within two business days of the interview, or sooner if you know they will be making a quick decision.

The medium you choose must be a good fit for the intended reader. You can send an email, hand written note on a card, or both. An email, followed with a hand written note is a way to send immediate correspondence, while also providing a personal touch.

What are the components of a thank you letter?

The letter should be short and conversational. There are three important factors to include and three paragraphs are probably sufficient. Send a personalized letter to each individual involved in the interview process.

The Opening: Mention the date of the interview and express your appreciation for the opportunity to meet with them.

The Body: Summarize your strongest selling points and reinforce your understanding of the position requirements. Include any important information that you may have omitted during the interview.

The Closing: Emphasize your interest in the position and the organization.
June 1, 20XX

Mr./Ms./Mrs./Dr. First and Last Name
Position title
Company Name
Address, Suite number
City, State/Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Mrs./Dr. Last Name:

Thank you for meeting with me on Wednesday, June 14, to discuss the Marketing Assistant position. I enjoyed learning more about your organization and the projects being accomplished in the Marketing Department.

As you will recall from our interview, I have experience working as an intern in a team environment where I was instrumental in the development of a successful marketing plan. I enjoy the challenges of this career field and my marketing degree program prepared me to analyze consumer trends and develop responsive strategies.

I am excited about the opportunity to work for the XYZ Corporation and look forward to hearing from you again.

Sincerely,

Jean Claude Cavalier

Jean Claude Cavalier
NOTE:
- Ask permission from your references and alert them when applying for jobs.
- Provide a copy of your resume to your references to refresh their memories of your capabilities and skills.
- Provide a copy of the job description or advertisement to your references; this will allow them to correlate your capabilities and skills to the position.
- Offer suggestions about what you would like your references to speak about on your behalf.
JOB SEARCH LOG

A job search log can help you keep track of where you submit applications, send resumes, and the contacts you make with companies. Utilizing the following template can help you keep organized with your job search details and be well prepared for interviews and follow-ups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Contact Mo-Da-Yr</th>
<th>Business Name / Address / Website</th>
<th>How Contact was Made</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Position / Posting # Applied For</th>
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NOTES: [Use Name] [Password]

Follow-up
Date(s):
Contact Person:
□ By Phone
□ By Email

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Follow-up

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Contact Person:
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Title:____________________

□ Resume □ Application □ Interview Date_______