

## **Business Writing: How to Write a Cover Letter**

### **University of West Florida Writing Lab**

Cover letters are an important part of the resume submission process. Cover letters are used to relate information to prospective employers that does not appear on your resume.

Be sure to use standard business format for your cover letter. Type the cover letter on letterhead or on plain paper. If you are submitting a cover letter with your resume, use the same paper for both items.

Cover letters should be addressed to an individual. If a contact name has been given in the advertisement, be sure to address the letter to that person. If an individual is not named, you may use an attention line (ATTENTION: Human Resources Department) or subject line (SUBJECT: Internship Position). The salutations "Dear Sir or Madam" and "To Whom It May Concern" are obsolete.

The first paragraph of your cover letter should include 1) where you learned of this job opening, 2) what position you are seeking, and 3) your basic qualifications.

Some open position announcements will ask that you include your salary history or salary requirements in your cover letter. Always be sure to include any specific information required in your cover letter. Most announcements will make clear the information the company is seeking in your cover letter.

In your second paragraph, you may include a brief outline of your work history and any information you do not have listed on your resume. For example, if you have been very involved in the fund raising for your volunteer group, make sure to include that information in your cover letter. Your cover letter can allow you to be more specific in your qualifications.

Make sure to include a small paragraph that includes a way to contact you. You may list your phone number and email address again.

If you are emailing your resume and cover letter, it is almost impossible to add your signature before sending it off. However, if you are faxing or mailing your resume, be sure to sign the letter before mailing it. When signing your cover letter, make sure your signature is as legible as possible.

1234 Main Street  
Pensacola, Florida 32514  
June 21, 2003

Ms. Jane R. Boss  
Director, Human Resources  
WRITE Technologies  
3333 Wright Street  
Pensacola, Florida 32511

Dear Ms. Boss:

I am writing in response to your advertisement for a Corporate Receptionist placed in the June 10, 2003, Pensacola News Journal. My customer service background and my education make me highly qualified for your open position.

I have worked in a variety of customer service-related fields, and I have experience working with multi-line phone systems. While pursuing my bachelor's degree, I have worked as an intern for WXJM's Promotions Manager, and one of my responsibilities was to answer incoming phone calls for her office. In addition, I was responsible for logging all interview and calls, scheduling appointments, and greeting visitors.

I would like to discuss my qualifications with you at your convenience. Please feel free to telephone me at 850-555-1234, or email me at [johnastudent@email.com](mailto:johnastudent@email.com). I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

John A. Student