

Cover Letters

Cover letters serve as a bridge between your resume and the specific job to which you are applying. Cover letters are written in "your voice" and serve as an opportunity for you to explain your interest and qualifications for a particular job in your own words. Therefore, there isn't a "one size fits all" cover letter. They are also a reflection of your writing skills, so take time and care to proofread and review your document. It needs to be specific to the organization and position—a generic cover letter isn't likely to help you land an interview.

SEND A COVER LETTER WHEN:

- Applying through Handshake or another online database and the employer has requested it
- Responding to a job posting via direct mail or email
- Sending a response to a referral from a friend or acquaintance

GUIDELINES

A COVER LETTER SHOULD BE:

- Formal, polished, and grammatically correct
- Precise, concise, cordial, and confident
- Written in the active voice
- Varied in sentence structure—don't begin all sentences with "I"
- Printed on the same type of paper as your resume
- Targeted to the needs of the company and requirements of the position
- A way of connecting the job description with your resume and skills

ADDRESS COVER LETTERS TO A SPECIFIC PERSON

Don't use "To whom it may concern." If you do not have a contact name:

- Investigate the company website and other online resources for contacts and addresses
- Try to find the department of the company the job is under
- If all efforts fail, use a proper salutation such as "Dear Hiring Manager"

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- A cover letter is not a repetition of the wording on your resume
- When sending a resume via email, follow the cover letter format to introduce your attached resume and write the cover letter in the body of the email
- Include the position/job title and your full name in the subject line for cover letters sent via email
- The font and formatting of your cover letter document should match the font and formatting of your resume

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION- "Who are you?" "Why them?"

- States WHY you are writing
 - Responding to an advertised opening
 - Mention your student level (senior, junior, etc.) and/or graduation date
- States WHY you are applying to, or are interested in, this employer
 - Company's training program
 - Company's product or service
 - Demonstrate your company research
- Mention your contact/referral if you have one

BODY PARAGRAPH(s) - "Why you?"

- States WHAT qualifications you bring to the position
- Highlights two or three experiences or academic achievements that directly relate to the qualifications the employer is seeking
- Proves through examples of experiences and activities that you have key skills for the position—i.e., leadership, communication, problem-solving ability, and analytical skills
- May close with a summary sentence of your qualifications and a confident statement that you can make a contribution to the organization

CLOSING PARAGRAPH - "Thank You"

- States what you want—an interview or an opportunity to further discuss your qualifications and employment opportunities
- Thanks the person and indicates that you look forward to speaking to or meeting with him/her, but indicates flexibility as to time and place

Keep to 1 page length

Use header from your resume for a uniform look.

Exact contact name may not always be available. Use any specific info available.

If a contact is not listed, address it to the "Hiring Manager"

1st paragraph:

- Include position title
- How you heard of it
- Brief introduction
- If imminent or recent, list grad date

Body:

- Relate your experience to the job description
- Describe any technical skills, honors, or accomplishments
- Can be done with bullet list if lengthy

Closing: Thank them

Basic Cover Letter Sample

Your cover letter should introduce who you are, why you want to work for the company, and why you are a great fit for the position. It needs to be individualized for each employer and highlight your best and most relevant work or accomplishments. A well written letter generates interest and can gain you an interview, be sure to proofread!

Student Name
Melbourne, FL | email | phone number

Date

Contact Name
Business Address
City, ST zip code

Dear _____,

I am very interested in the [title of position] position posted on your company career site. I am a current student at Florida Institute of Technology studying [major] and am eager to use my [list skills] at [company name]. My back-ground with [list pertinent experience/ connections] has prepared me to make a positive impact in your company.

My most recent internship at [company name] involved [list relevant responsibilities], which allowed me to learn and master [list skills closely aligned with job requirements]. While at Florida Tech I have been working on [list relevant project or research], which has given me the ability to [list job requirement(s)]. I used [list technical programs or skills] to complete [list relevant accomplishments]. Further, I am part of [list relevant clubs or associations] and have volunteered with [organization/campus activity], which keeps me current on the latest developments in [career field]. I plan to use the skills I have gained from these experiences to excel as a [position name].

Thank you for taking the time to review my application materials and attached resume. Your consideration is appreciated and I welcome the opportunity to interview with you.

Sincerely,

Student Name

Sample Cover Letters

Position Description

"Chart your course for success in a fast-paced learning environment and get set to become a top-performing account manager in the group insurance segment of the employee benefits industry. Highly motivated and results driven recent grads and early-career professionals will experience on-the-job and classroom training, coaching, and mentoring as part of CIGNA Group Insurance's Leadership Development Program."

Student Name
Melbourne, FL | email | phone number

For a uniform look, it's acceptable to use the same header from your resume, as long as it is neat and concise

Charles Dean
University Relations Specialist
CIGNA Corporation
Hartford, CT

October 14, 2021

Dear Charles Dean,

I am pleased to submit my application for the CIGNA Group Insurance's Leadership Development Program. Currently, I am a senior majoring in Marketing at Florida Institute of Technology (Florida Tech) and will graduate in December 2021. The qualities I have to offer CIGNA in this program include:

- **Highly motivated with outstanding interpersonal skills:** While working as an intern at ABC Company, I was selected for the marketing strategy team, where I collaborated with partners and contributed original ideas that helped to increase revenue by 40% and customer base by 20%. Prior attending Florida Tech, I volunteered for a local non-profit organization where I worked with clients from varying socioeconomic backgrounds and cultures. I was named "Volunteer of the Month" at this organization as recognition for my contributions and commitment.
- **Demonstrated leader and team player:** In my sophomore year at Florida Tech, I co-founded a student organization on campus aimed at increasing local community service involvement. Over the past two years, we have been able to generate a membership count of 50+ students and have made valuable contributions to the community through public clean-up efforts, food drives, and fundraisers. I also served as a Resident Assistant in the university's largest resident halls while achieving a 3.6 GPA during my junior year.
- **Excellent analytical and quantitative abilities:** In a team-based business simulation, I continually analyzed the market for our product and our competition for a financial services firm throughout the semester. The professor acknowledged my team's final project as being "an outstanding example for future classes." As an intern in Summer 2021, I participated in a cross-functional team to assess a proposed business venture expanding customer product offerings.

This bulleted format can be used to demonstrate and draw attention to specific skills

Demonstrate your research and knowledge of the company

CIGNA is a long-time leader in providing full-service industry solutions. CIGNA's mission to help people lead healthier, more secure lives matches my own personal values and interests, which is demonstrated in my community service efforts.

I am committed to adding value and contributing to CIGNA's global expansion. I welcome any opportunity to interview with your company and discuss my fit for the Leadership Development Program. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Student Name

Position Description

Product Development Engineering careers at Vandelay Industries offer you the chance to drive innovation and embrace bold new challenges as a member of the team responsible for revolutionizing the automotive industry. Today, we're on a new road, with defined goals and renewed energy. You'll see it in our attention to quality and performance, and in the groundbreaking designs and technologies that create an unparalleled driving experience for our customers. We're looking for an Engineer with 0-3 years of experience and a BSME to do the following:

- Design and develop robust manufacturing processes for wiring manufacturing facilities
- Follow Vandelay's Advanced Process Development process throughout the project and assure deliverables are met on time
- Seek out, understand, and interpret product requirements that can be implemented in innovative new manufacturing processes and in a socially and environmentally conscious manner.

Taylor Potter
Melbourne, FL | email | phone number

Vandelay Industries
Product Development Engineering
Orlando, FL

Knowledge and skills gained through
classes, projects, internships, and campus
involvement count as experience

December 10, 2021

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am a senior at Florida Institute of Technology (Florida Tech) majoring in Mechanical Engineering, on track to graduate with my BSME in May 2022. I recently found the position posting for the Entry Level Mechanical Engineer at Vandelay Industries on my university's Handshake site. I was impressed with Vandelay Industries' innovative approach to providing eco-friendly options for those in the automotive industry, as well as the company's recent market expansion and use of the most current materials technology in its products. For these reasons, I am eager to apply for this position and believe I would make an excellent addition to the Product Development Engineering team.

My education in Mechanical Engineering and experience in and out of the classroom makes me a valuable candidate. As an engineering intern last year at XYZ Company, I learned a great deal of how engineering and technology companies work closely with the automotive industry, and I believe the perspective I gained will allow me to contribute immediately to your team. Throughout this internship, I was tasked to produce two deliverables within strict time frames to meet deadlines, both of which I was successful.

Additionally, I am committed to advancing social and environmental standards in our industry, as shown through my involvement in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and Student Energy Board on campus. Our efforts aim to reduce material waste across Florida Tech's campus, and specifically in regards to materials waste in engineering projects. We were able to reduce physical waste by nearly 22% in the first year, as well as reduced costs for the ME department by 3.5% by researching affordable alternative materials to source project prototypes. Furthermore, my active involvement in student government has helped strengthen my leadership and communication skills, both of which are vital for successful engineers.

Thank you for taking the time to review my application for the position of Entry Level Mechanical Engineer. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding my fit Vandelay Industries.

Sincerely,

Taylor Potter

Quantify accomplishments when possible