



**WRITE A COVER LETTER
&
REFERENCE PAGE**

Created by your Career Services Department @

ecpi UNIVERSITY



[FOR FORMAT & STRUCTURE](#)



[FOR "WOWING" THE EMPLOYER THE EMPLOYER](#)



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THE COVER LETTER

The purpose of the cover letter is to introduce you to the employer, to spark an interest in your potential value to the employer and, ultimately, to get an interview. The cover letter should identify the specific position or type of position sought and should also illustrate your familiarity with the skills and training needed for effective performance. The cover letter should motivate the reader to want to meet you in person!

FORMAT & STRUCTURE OF A COVER LETTER

- The cover letter should be typed in standard business format on 8 ½-by-11 white bond paper and should include your name, address and date.
- The cover letter should not contain any spelling errors or typing errors and should be neat and grammatically correct.
- In all cases, it is important that your cover letter be addressed to a specific contact (“Dear Sir or Madam” or “To Whom It May Concern” or “Dear HR Department” is impersonal.)

SECTIONS OF A COVER LETTER

There are 3 sections to a cover letter:

1. *Introduction:* The opening paragraph should immediately attract attention. This can be done by using the name of the person who referred you, referring to a specific job listing or by identifying a unique talking point about the particular organization. For example, you may decide to get attention by referencing an article or fact a trade publication.
2. *Body:* The body of the cover letter should point out your value and answer the employer’s number one question, “Why should I hire you?” Use language that the employer is familiar with from their website, brochures, manuals, job descriptions and your own personal work experiences. Highlight and focus on the most relevant qualifications listed in your resume.
3. *Closing Paragraph:* The closing paragraph is the action stage. Take the initiative and suggest arrangements for a specific interview time and date. You may want to suggest 2 or 3 dates. Your suggested meet dates should never be more than 10 business days from the date of your letter. Close by thanking the employer for considering your letter and resume. You want to type the word “Enclosure” in the lower left-hand corner to indicate that your resume is included.

The cover letter should always be sent to the individual who has the authority to hire you or influence the decision. It should always be addressed to the person by first and last name. In your cover letter, tell your employer about yourself, who you are, what you have done, what job you would like, what you have to offer, discuss your potential and why you want to work for that organization.

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“WOWING” THE EMPLOYER

GET THE EMPLOYER’S ATTENTION

- Keep it to one page.
- Demonstrate your interest in a specific employer.
- Demonstrate your interest in a specific position.
- Reference any individuals who recommended the contact (get approval first).
- Address it to the specific person and include their title.

STIMULATE THE EMPLOYER’S INTEREST

- Relate your abilities to the employer’s requirements.
- Emphasize your talents, skills, and interests.
- Describe why the employer should have an interest in you.
- Emphasize your strengths and downplay your weaknesses.
- Elaborate on the relevant qualifications in your resume.

ASK FOR AN INTERVIEW!

- Always ask for the interview.
- Indicate that an interview will provide a better picture of your abilities.
- Provide your availability (date, times).
- Restate that you will contact the employer for an appointment.
- Include your telephone number, address, and email address.

HINT: The better you do your homework on companies, the easier this will be.



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SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Date

Mr. John Doe
Vice President
ACME Corporation
123 Main Street
City, State Zip

Dear Mr. Doe:

I am writing to introduce myself and to request your consideration for the position of _____ . Enclosed, please find a copy of my resume.

Having studied the development of employers in your field, I believe I can help your organization meet its goals. My education and experience make me a positive contributor to your team.

If convenient, I would appreciate a personal appointment to present my qualifications and review my resume. I am available [*date*] at [*time*] and on [*date*] at [*time*] and can be reached at [*telephone number*] or [*email address*].

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Name

Address
City, State Zip

Email

Enclosure or attachment if emailed

REFERENCE PAGE

When thinking of references, make a list of potential references that include anyone you know who can offer a learned judgment of your character and skills. This should include anyone that can provide an accurate assessment of you as a person, as a student, and as an employee. The best references to list are a former teacher or professor, a former employer, and a character reference (friend).

A reference page should consist of no less than three employer references and no less than two personal/academic references.

SAMPLE REFERENCE LIST

Start by making lists of those persons you feel will speak best to your character, work ethic, achievements, and contributions. Be sure to list these persons from the categories of Employer, Academic, and Personal.

EMPLOYER

ACADEMIC

PERSONAL

Once you have identified potential references, before using their name, always contact each reference. Supply them with a copy of your credentials (i.e. your resume). Let them know that you have chosen them and that they may receive a call from a potential employer.

SAMPLE REFERENCE PAGE

REFERENCES

PROFESSIONAL

John Doe
Vice President
ACME Corporation
123 Main Street
City, State Zip
Phone

Jane K. Doe
HR Supervisor
ACME Corporation
123 Main Street
City, State Zip
Phone

Roger Rabbit
Department Manager
ACME Corporation
123 Main Street
City, State Zip
Phone

ACADEMIC

Buford T. Justice
Program Director Criminal Justice
ECPI University
789 Any Street
City, State Zip
Phone

PERSONAL

Mr. George Washington
State Representative
5678 Capital Boulevard
City, State Zip
Phone

SOURCE

All information comprised from The Career EDGE ([CareerEDGEOnline.com](https://www.careeredgeonline.com)) workbook.