



NORTHWEST CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Wisdom · Faith · Service

Cover Letter Tutorial

Career Development & Student Success

A Successful Job Search

- Step 1
 - Understand yourself and what you bring to the position/company (i.e., professional identify or personal brand)
- Step 2
 - Research the job description and company thoroughly to identify their needs
- Step 3
 - Tailor your professional job search tools to demonstrate how you meet their needs
- Step 4
 - Establish relationships with professionals and peers in your area of career interest, where you can make a contribution
- Step 5
 - Communicate effectively and consistently your personal brand online and in person



Step 1: Identify

- Develop vision, mission, goals, values, and passions statements
 - Define who you are and what you are about
- Why?
 - Easier to express it to others when you've identified it for yourself
 - Allows you to make decisions based on "best fit"
 - Reminder of life's purpose (mission)
 - Filter for setting priorities
 - Chance to maximize your talents
 - Opportunity magnet



Step 2: Research

- Review information related to your target position and/or company.
- Understand the functions of the position and the culture of the company.
- Resources
 - Company websites
 - Informational Interviews
 - Labor Market Information
 - Career Development website – www.nwcu.edu/career



Step 3: Prepare

Cover Letter Basics

- Purpose:
 - To connect you to the position, as well as express your passion and enthusiasm while highlighting your accomplishments
- Format:
 - Standard business letter
 - Include name, company, and address
 - Address to a specific person or “Greetings:”
- Layout
 - Use same font as resume
 - Include same “header” as resume



JANE STUDENT

123 SW. Simple Ave
Portland, OR 97223

503-555-5555
jane.student@gmail.com

August 8, 2005

Ms. Monica Cruz
Vice President of Finance
Peter Jacobsen Sports, LLC
9400 SW Barnes Rd. Suite 550
Portland, OR 97225

Dear Ms. Cruz:

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for the Accounts Payable Specialist position posted in The Oregonian. I enjoy executing projects and events that engage others in a fun and creative way.

Based on my education in accounting and business administration and previous experience in the golf industry, I am strongly qualified to fill the role in accounts payable. I bring to the position strong detail orientation, organizational skills, and commitment to integrity. With experience in both accounts payable and receivable, I am equipped to enter and code invoices, print checks, and reconcile accounts. I also bring experience in event coordination and implementation, specifically golf tournaments.

I am confident that I will be an asset to the PJS team. I look forward to meeting you in person and discussing my qualifications further. I can be reached by phone or email, 503-555-5555 or jane.student@gmail.com, to schedule an interview. I will contact you within a week to confirm the receipt of my materials.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of my qualifications.

Best regards,

Jane Student



Cover Letter – 1st Paragraph

- State why you are writing and how you became attracted to this particular company and position
- Mention specific characteristics of the company that have impressed you
 - “executing projects and events that engage...”
- Name the position for which you are applying
 - “Accounts Payable Specialist”
- If you were referred, mentioned the source from which you learned of the opening
 - “Posted in *The Oregonian*”



Cover Letter – 2nd Paragraph

- Draw attention to your qualifications and/or experiences that are relevant to the potential employer
 - “my education in accounting and business administration and previous experience in the golf industry”
- Highlight a particular job or special project that directly relates to the opening
 - “With experience in both accounts payable and receivable...”
- Convince your reader that this valuable experience makes you right for the job
 - “strong detail orientation, organizational skills, and commitment to integrity”
- Do not repeat the content of your resume, but fill in the blanks your resume leaves open



Closing Paragraph

- Indicate your desire for a personal interview
 - “I am confident that I will be an asset to the PJS team. I look forward to meeting you in person and discussing my qualifications further.”
- Repeat your phone number in the letter and offer any assistance to help with a speedy response
 - “I can be reached by phone or email, 503-555-5555 or jane.student@gmail.com, to schedule an interview.”
- Ask if the company desires any additional information or references



Closing Paragraph (Continued)

- Follow up each resume and cover letter with a phone call. If you plan to follow up by phone, then state when you will be calling the company.
 - “I will contact you to confirm the receipt of my materials within a week.”
- Conclude by thanking the employer for considering you for the position
 - “Thank you for your time and consideration of my qualifications.”



Errors to Avoid

- Boring and formulaic – especially the first paragraph
- Too long
- Ask for an entry-level job
- Include unsolicited salary request
- Include negative information
- Rehash your resume
- Sound too desperate, willing to do anything
- Display ignorance about the company to which you are writing
- Addressing it “Dear Sir/Madam” or “To Whom It May Concern”



Examples of Errors

- While I may not have the technical know-how that Arthur Andersen seeks in its recruits, I learn new material quickly.
- Cary Bluckstein suggested I contact you about filling any possible openings you might have in your company.
- If your store sells tennis equipment, I urge you to consider someone like me – a tennis buff with excellent sales skills.



Top Ten Tips for Cover Letters

10. Use formal business letter format
9. Use the same header from your resume as “letterhead”
8. Connect with the employer on a deeper level
7. Eliminate spelling & grammar errors
6. Highlight what sets you apart
5. Express gratitude
4. Do not rehash your resume
3. Address is to a specific person or use “Greetings:”
2. Ask for the Interview



Contact

Angela J. Doty, M.A., GCDF

Director of Career Development & Student Success

Pomajevich Faculty Building, Office 121

P 541-684-7289

adoty@nwcu.edu



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