

COVER LETTER GUIDE

What is a Cover Letter?

- A document you will be asked to submit along with your resume.
- A one-page letter that showcases your writing skills and details your **strengths** and **experiences** that support the reason why you are a leading candidate for the position.
- Employers may read this first to determine if they want to look at your other application materials.

Cover Letter Tips:

- Cover letters should be no more than 1 page (3-5 paragraphs) as an undergraduate.
 - It does not restate your resume. This is a narrative to share *your story*.
- Use the same font and font size as your resume bullet points (11-12 pt.).
- Employers make hiring decisions based on what candidates can offer them, not what they can offer candidates – use this letter to show why you are a good fit.
- Be sure to address your letter to the correct person/employer.

To begin writing a Cover Letter:

- Read the job description and highlight important details (see **page 2**).
- Review your resume to compare your skills and qualifications with the job description. Highlight important details (see **page 3**).
 - Conduct research on the employer using tools like Handshake, Glassdoor, and the employer's website to assess how you can *add* to their company.
- Begin with a simple outline. You can use a master copy of your cover letter that you can customize for each position (see **page 4**).
- Example cover letter (see **page 5**)

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Before you begin:

Read through the job description. What are the core responsibilities of this position? What key qualifications is the employer looking for?

DESCRIPTION

As an Area Manager with ABC Company, you will have the opportunity to lead and develop your own team of ABC Associates; one of your main focuses will be **motivating, mentoring, and coaching your team**. You will be responsible for engaging your team during a shift to maintain the highest levels of safety, quality, attendance performance and engagement are maintained. To achieve this, managers are expected to provide their associates with the tools needed for success as well as keenly drive productivity and efficiency through **data-driven decisions and analytical problem-solving**.

Key responsibilities include:

- **Developing performance goals & objectives to achieve customer promise expectations, ensure accuracy and quality**
- Partnering with the management team to establish and maintain quality control standards
- Proactively identifying and **leading process improvement initiatives**
- **Leading and developing a team of ABC Associates**
- Communicating policies to associates and act as the primary information source for the team, maintaining compliance and consistency and taking corrective action when needed
- Ensuring procedures are followed for building security and product loss prevention
- Supporting all safety programs & OSHA compliance to ensure a safe work environment for all Associates

Tip #1:

Pay attention to the first few bullet points – these are important to the employer and should be mentioned in your letter.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS

- You pride yourself in leading others; you have **direct management experience** and have been responsible for your employees' performance.
- You have an eye for efficiency, **have experience identifying & executing process improvement initiatives**.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- You have a bachelor's degree in Engineering, Operations, or a related field.
- **You enjoy analytical work and using data to provide thought-provoking and workable solutions. Data is what you look to when given a problem to solve.**
- You are leader and exhibit that in you every day work. You not only have experience in managing a team of 30+ employees, you also lead process improvements though Lean process, Kaizen, and Six Sigma.
- You typically volunteer to **lead projects and help your team achieve goals**. You have a track record of taking ownership and driving results.

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Before you begin:

Review your resume to compare your skills and qualifications with the job description.

Chris Combination

434-555-2000 | ccombination@rangers.uwp.edu
Linkedin.com/in/chris-combination

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS PROFILE

- Managed **brand development project increasing customer loyalty** by >30% within 3 months
- Planned and created promotional and publicity strategies, increasing business membership by 25%
- Directed marketing **campaign goals and objectives, target audience, and messaging**
- Lead service teams to improve customer satisfaction rating from 72% to >89% within 7 months

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in English

May 2021

Minor: Graphic Design

University of Wisconsin-Parkside – Kenosha, WI

GPA: 3.7; Dean's List

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Marketing Intern, NEC Corporation of America, Irving, TX

May 2019 – August 2019

- **Generated a digital loyalty program** which produced a repeat customer base of >35%
- Assembled sales materials, dealer kits, and collateral in preparation of marketing presentations
- Channeled marketing campaigns and assisted with all components of product messaging
- **Supported the NEC Product Marketing Team with various initiatives including writing internal and external communications, web content, and social media for customer growth and allegiance**

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Shift Supervisor/Server/Host, Applebee's, Racine, WI

May 2017 – Present

- Promoted from Host/Server to **Shift Supervisor** after 6 months
- Improved customer **satisfaction rating from 72% to >89% in 7 months** as Shift Supervisor
- **Select and train staff** to provide excellent customer service, and promote
- Provide **leadership and management** as Shift Supervisor for 15 staff and

Sales Associate, Target, Racine, WI

- Greeted customers and responded to guest inquiries with accuracy and
- Cross-trained to work in multiple areas of store as needed
- Organized floor sets to strategically place product and rotated seasonal

Tip #2:
Numbers speak volumes – if you can include quantifiable information your document will stand out.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Volunteer, Food Pantry of Downtown Ministries

August 2017 – Present

- Recruit and organize volunteers to cook, set-up, and serve 3 weekly meals

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Start writing:

Begin with a simple outline. You can use a master copy of your cover letter that you can customize for each position.

Heading

Phone number | email address
LinkedIn URL

Date

Mr./Mrs./Dr. (First and) Last Name/Human Resources
Job Title
Name of Employer/Organization
City, State, and Zip Code

Tip #3:
If you don't have the name of the person you are sending your application to, list Human Resources or Hiring Manager as the addressee.

Opening:

Dear Mr./Mrs./Dr. Last Name/Hiring Manager

Opening Paragraph:

Grab your reader's attention within the first two lines. Avoid phrases like "My name is..." or "I wish to apply for...". Instead, try a creative approach to catch their eye. For example, "Leading innovative program initiatives designed to improve customer satisfaction and achieve business goals are what drives me to excel in my position as professional in the business operations industry. As a marketing intern with NEC Corporation of America..."

- Indicate the reason for your letter and state the specific to which you are applying.
- Mention the name of the person who referred you to the position should that apply to you.
- Make a connection to the employer – Why do you want to work for them? What excites you about the employer/position? Be specific and show your research.
- End your paragraph with a statement that summarizes your letter (like a thesis statement).

Middle Paragraph(s):

- Review what you highlighted in the job description (**page 2**) and prioritize your paragraphs according to what the employer emphasizes.
- Share specific and concise examples of internship/volunteering/work/project experiences that demonstrate your skills and qualifications.
 - Explain how these skills and experiences will contribute to the company/organization.

Closing Paragraph:

- Confidently reiterate your interest and qualifications for the position.
- Mention that you look forward to discussing your candidacy further and you will follow up soon.
 - "Leading project teams using data and assessment prepared me to developing new ways to exceed customer expectations."
- Thank the employer for their consideration.

Signing Off:

- Sincerely, I look forward to hearing from you, Thank you for your consideration,

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May 1, 2020

Human Resources
ABC Company
Kenosha, WI, 53158

Dear Hiring Manger,

Leading innovative program initiatives designed to improve customer satisfaction and achieve business goals are what drives me to excel in my position as a professional in the marketing industry. As a marketing intern with NEC Corporation of America, I am called to strategize with cross-functional teams to create communication plans that inform customers that they are provided a strong IT infrastructure to support their business. I learned about the Area Manager position with ABC Company through my peer, John Smith, who works in your business services department as an accountant. After reviewing ABC Company's website and learning more about its strong presence in the Kenosha community, I am excited to apply. My leadership abilities, data-informed decision-making practices, and ability to coordinate innovative projects make me an exceptional candidate.

During my time as an intern with NEC Corporation of America, I was able to work with a variety of teams to write internal and external communications for email newsletters and social media platforms to further engage with our customers. This experience taught me different project delegation and communication strategies so the projects were completed with accuracy and in an efficient manner. By working collaboratively, my team and other personnel were able to create a digital customer loyalty program that produced a repeat customer base of over 35%.

In order to prepare me for leading teams and working with others on large projects, I call on my time as a shift supervisor at Applebee's to identify effective strategies to use in the business industry. While working as a shift supervisor, I led 15 staff members by offering them open lines of communication, continued training opportunities, and reliable resources to help them be successful at their job. I not only learned how to be a leader but also a contributor in customer satisfaction, which I plan to reflect on and implement as a leader with ABC Company.

ABC Company's focus on providing reliable service to their customers aligns well with my passion of making data-informed decisions that will positively impact customer satisfaction. I am confident that my experience and skills will prepare me to excel as an Area Manager. I look forward to talking with you talking with you more about how I will make a positive impact at ABC Company.

Thank you for your consideration,
Chris Combination

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