

Crafting Cover Letters

Your cover letter should accomplish the following:

1. Clearly route your cover letter and resume to the right person for the right job opening.
2. Show you can communicate professionally in writing.
3. Reinforce qualifications presented in your resume and show that you are a good fit for the company by using short narrative examples of how your experience and skills match the needs of the employer.
4. Reflect your positive attitude, personality, motivation and enthusiasm.

My Address
My Address

April 4, 2011

Company Name
Company Address
Company Address

Dear (insert the correct contact person's name here, or their title):

Arouse Interest: Identify the position you're applying to and indicate how you heard about it. Be specific in defining your purpose.

Introduce and Sell Your Relevant Skills and Experience: Describe how you meet the job qualifications and the needs of the employer.

- Outline your strongest qualifications that match position requirements
- Give examples of your skills and experience that relate to the position
- Provide evidence of your related experiences and accomplishments

Request Further Action:

- Suggest a plan of action (request an interview, indicate you will call during a specific time)
- Always thank the employer at the close of your letter for the time and consideration given to your application

Sincerely,

My name signed in pen here if hard copy--if e-mailed, just eliminate these three extra spaces

My Name (typed)

Proofread, proofread, proofread! The number one reason employers throw out any application materials is due to spelling errors and typos!

Sample Program Assistant job announcement and customized Cover Letter

Boston Non-Profit Housing Association (BNHA) seeks a well-organized, self-motivated individual to help coordinate advocacy efforts as part of BNHA's regional work. BNHA is a thirty-two-year-old membership association that focuses government policy on housing solutions for low-income people who suffer disproportionately from the housing crisis, while promoting the preservation, development, and quality management of affordable housing. The program assistant will help pass policies and programs on the local and regional level that will support the development of affordable housing.

Job Duties and Responsibilities

Coordination/Advocacy

- Help schedule meetings, draft agendas, take notes, and circulate information to the Housing Action Network.
- Participate in meetings and discussions with local advocacy groups to ensure connection between the regional and local work.

Organizing/Training

- Help coordinate regional trainings on Inclusionary Housing, Community Acceptance, Housing Elements, and other local or regional housing efforts
- Assist in organizing local support for regional efforts by attending meetings and doing some outreach around sign-on letters or hearings.

Media / Communications

- Provide regular updates for BNHA's update, newsletter, and for the housing action network
- Assist in the release of reports by creating an updated press list and assisting in pitching stories.

Qualifications

Bachelor's degree required.

Experience in either organizing and campaign work helpful.

123 Amherst Avenue
Amherst, MA 01002

February 1, 2011

Ms. Mary James
Program Director
Boston Non-Profit Housing Association
100 Massachusetts Avenue
Boston, MA 02111

Dear Ms. James:

It is with enthusiasm that I apply for the Program Assistant position as seen on the University of Massachusetts Amherst Career Services website. I am passionate about and have a personal interest in advocating for affordable housing for all. I am a University of Massachusetts Amherst senior looking to relocate to Boston this spring.

Last summer I had the opportunity to intern for the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Boston, where I was exposed to a variety of advocacy efforts and campaign work. I used my strong organizational skills to schedule regional meetings, take notes and provide regular updates for the program directors. I aided in creating promotional publications, such as the monthly newsletter and circulated the information both via hard copy and internet in order to advertise our events and provide outreach to potential members. Additionally, I was the liaison for our local branch and coordinated Skype teleconferences for the five regional chapters to participate simultaneously.

I am someone with a lot of self motivation. For the past four years I have worked during the school year at Amherst Pizza and was recently promoted to manager. This coupled with my strong desire to make a difference for others makes me an excellent candidate. I look forward to discussing the position with you in more detail. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Emma Good