

OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

# COVER LETTER GUIDE



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY  
MADRID

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CAREER SERVICES

THE ART OF WRITING A COVER LETTER

# COVER LETTERS: EXPLAINED



Tap the video thumbnail to watch how you too can write an authentic cover letter.

In a cover letter, you highlight skills, professional experiences, and future career goals. The purpose of it is to get them to read your resume and open the door to a successful career journey.

👉 Cover letter checklist in the next page!

# COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Name of the role and company.
- ☐ Avoid "I am writing to apply for the [insert role] as advertised on your website." Be unique!
- ☐ Body Paragraphs - Connect your specific experiences to specific requirements in the job posting.
- ☐ Use keywords + language that mirrors the job posting.
- ☐ Tailor it to each company so it doesn't read like you send the same letter to every application.
- ☐ Tone - Confident without sounding arrogant. Center on what you did and how not just claiming traits.
- ☐ Real enthusiasm names a specific detail about why you are excited to apply to this opportunity. Avoid being generic.
- ☐ Closing - Restate your fit for this role in one line.
- ☐ Make a clear and confident call to action. Avoid a generic "Hope to hear from you soon."
- ☐ If a recruiter/manager read only your letter, would they still understand who you are, your experience and why you are a strong candidate?

# COVER LETTER DO'S AND DON'TS



I am writting to apply for the  
Programme Coordinator  
Position advertised on your  
website.



As an International Relations  
student who ogranized a model-UN  
conference for 80 delegates from  
12 countries, I am excited to bring  
the same coordination skills to the  
Programme Coordinator role at  
[company name]

I am a hard-working and  
organized person with strong  
communication skills.

During my final-year project, I build  
and documented a scheduling app  
used by 30 classmates, which  
meant explaining technical trade-  
offs to non-technical users and  
revising the interface based on  
their feedback.

I am an exceptional  
communicator and a natural  
leader.

I led a team of six to deliver the  
project two weeks ahead of  
schedule, earning us all an A+ on  
the final grade.

I am passionate about  
marketing and would love the  
opportunity to join your team.

Your recent campaign for  
[specific product/initiative] is  
exactly the kind of project I want  
to build a career around.

I possess exceptional  
interpersonal skills and a  
proven track record of  
success.

I enjoy the moment in a project  
where you have to get a team  
back on the same page; this is  
when I do my best work.

# EXAMPLE OF A CL AND EXTRA TIPS

Research the organization and identify the hiring manager whenever possible. If name can't be found, "Hiring Manager," "Human Resources Team," "Hiring Committee," can be used. Also, use a formal business letter format, which includes the address block of the person to whom you are sending the letter.

Your resume, cover letter, and references page should all use the same headings, fonts, and formatting.

Ima Plyen

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April 12, 202X

Ms. Kate Smith  
Assistant Director  
Youth Center  
5900 South Broadway  
St. Louis, MO 63123

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am writing to apply for the Marketing Associate position (#A1732), which I found through Saint Louis University's Handshake database. As a recent graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication, I am seeking a position with a nonprofit organization where I can utilize my degree and leverage my past marketing and public relations experience. The mission of the Youth Center to "equip individuals and the community to reach their full potential" aligns well with my professional values and the opportunity to assist your organization in furthering its mission is exciting to me.

I have substantial experience creating marketing plans and designing materials. Through my internship with Florida Power Company and my leadership positions within Phi Kappa Theta fraternity, I developed several marketing plans and effectively implemented them. In my senior marketing course, I conducted marketing research and utilized the data to make recommendations, which the manager successfully implemented.

Additionally, my leadership and communication skills are strong. In my internship with the Saint Louis University Office of Admissions, I supervised fifteen fellow students in their roles as student ambassadors by creating weekly schedules and providing feedback for improvement. I also provided detailed and time-sensitive information to admissions counselors and prospective students, which enhanced my phone and written communication skills.

My combination of education, skills, and experience will make me a strong fit with the Youth Center as the Marketing Associate. I would appreciate the opportunity to further discuss the position with you in an interview. I look forward to hearing back from you. Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

*"Insert graphic of signature here"*

Ima Plyen

## FIRST PARAGRAPH:

- Include the position to which you are applying
- Provide a brief overview of your qualifications for the role
- Indicate why you are interested in the specific organization and role, emphasizing what you have to offer them instead of what you want from them
- If someone referred you to the position, mention it here

## MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS:

- Use 1-3 paragraphs to describe the specific skills and experiences you have relevant to the role
- Use SPECIFIC examples; don't just say you have leadership experience
- Tell the employer what you accomplished and what you learned, referencing a previous position or experience

## FINAL PARAGRAPH:

- Summarize your qualifications
- Request an interview
- Mention the best way to contact you
- Thank the employer for their time
- Including a signature is optional if the letter is sent electronically

Use formal titles and the individual's last name.

TIP: "Mrs." should not be used unless you have been instructed to do so. "Ms." is the proper title for women you do not know.

Customize EVERY cover letter to the specific position to which you are applying.

Employers will often discard candidates who use generic cover letters.

Use the language and requirements of the job description to guide your word choices and to select specific relevant experiences to highlight.

## AI Assistance Tips:

- AI can help you build a resume, but complete reliance often leads to vague and nonspecific cover letters
- If AI is utilized, further revisions will be necessary