

Cover Letter Reminders:

- The purpose of your resume is to excite an employer enough to call you in for an interview. Likewise the purpose of the cover letter is to get an employer to read your resume, a copy of which accompanies the letter.
- Your goal is to give your reader enough information to interest him or her in looking at your resume, but not so much that the reader is overwhelmed.
- It's best to address your letter to a specific person, so always research the company you are applying to and find out the name of an individual in order to address your letter properly. Often the best person to contact is the head of the department you wish to work in.
- A good rule of thumb to use in deciding if you should answer a classified ad is to answer it if you have 80 percent of the skills or background that it says the job requires.
- If you're writing to someone to whom you've been referred, be sure to name your referent in your first paragraph.

Cover Letter Example

121 South 24th Street, #201-A
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 555-1234

October 16, 2001

Dr. Carol Manager
Director, Program Development
JHPIEGO
1513 Thames Street, Suite #200
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Dr. Manager:

While researching the Maryland public health marketplace, I learned of your facility and would like to be considered for the position of Program Development Officer for the Caribbean and Latin American Unit. My resume is enclosed.

In May of 2002, I will complete my Master of Public Health degree at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. The program is intensive and allowed me to draw on knowledge and skills from a variety of disciplines to help define, critically assess and resolve a broad spectrum of public health problems and issues, which I might face during my professional career. In addition, I completed an independent study based on my work as a Technical Adviser for Latin American countries at the Center for Development and Population Activities; and as a volunteer at the Baltimore City Health Department, I interviewed sexually transmitted disease patients for contact information, drew blood samples, and referred cluster suspects and associates for examination.

I am confident my skills and experience would prove beneficial to your organization and would welcome an opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in person. I can be reached after 5:00 pm at (301) 555-1234, or you may leave a message on my answering machine and I will return the call promptly. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erin C. Gilmartin

Enclosure

Cover Letter Structure

Your Home Address
City, State, Zip Code
Phone Number

Current Date
Employer's Name
Title
Organization
Name Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr., Ms., Dr. _____:

FOR AN ADVERTISED JOB OPENING:

First Paragraph: Briefly introduce yourself. Tell your contact what you want and how you know about his/her organization. Try to trigger the reader's attention with an interesting first sentence.

Second Paragraph: Give a concise overview of your work history and the skills you have that will help you perform the job. Do not go into as much detail as the reader will find in the resume. Refer him/her to the enclosed resume for additional information.

Third Paragraph: State your confidence in your abilities and give information on how you can be contacted.

Final Paragraph: Express appreciation of his /her consideration, and mention that you are looking forward to hearing from/meeting him/her.

WHEN NO CURRENT OPENINGS ARE KNOWN:

First Paragraph: Briefly introduce yourself. If another person referred you to the reader, mention the name of your referent and why you are specifically writing to the reader.

Second Paragraph: State that you are exploring employment opportunities in your field of interest. State clearly that you would like to obtain advice, suggestions and information about positions in your field, and that you do not expect the reader to know of any available openings at this time. Be specific in your reasons for wanting to meet with the reader. You may wish to either enclose a resume or take one to the meeting.

Third Paragraph: State that you will call on a certain day to arrange a brief meeting at his/her convenience.

Final Paragraph: Express appreciation for his/her consideration and for his/her assistance in your job search.

Sincerely,

Full Name

Enclosure (Alert your reader to the fact that another document – your resume accompanies your letter)