

COVER LETTER GUIDE



Student Employment Services

2nd Floor Ender Hall

grcc.edu/ses

616.234.4170

455 East Fulton Street

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Writing a Strong Cover Letter

Your cover letter introduces you to a prospective employer. It may be an email or in hard copy. Either way it creates your first impression and demonstrates your ability to communicate. While a cover letter may not always be required, it is a great way to explain to an employer why you are a good fit for the position.

Cover Letter Content

Introduction (1 paragraph)

- Catch the employer's attention quickly by leading with a strong statement.
- Clearly **express why you are writing**.
- State how you learned of the organization and job opening.
- **Express your interest** in the organization and job.
- Identify **any connection(s)** you have with the organization.

Proof of qualifications (1-2 paragraphs)

- Expand on the information in your resume.
- Identify **one-two of your strongest qualifications** and clearly explain how these skills apply to the job.
- **Refer to the job description**, if applying to a specific position.
- Demonstrate that you have **researched** the organization.
- Explain how you are a **good fit for the position** and/or organization.

Strong finish (1 paragraph) - Closing

- Re-emphasize your interest in the position.
- Express your interest in an interview.
- State that you will follow-up with a phone call (make sure you do call).

- Thank the reader for their time.

Writing a Strong Cover Letter

Cover letter strategies

- Address your cover letter to a **specific person**. Figure out who this person is and their title. If you cannot find the contact information, address your letter with “Dear Hiring Manager.”
- Write your cover letter in the **traditional business format** (even if you are sending email).
- **Customize each letter** to the position by analyzing the job description and highlighting the experience, skills, and education that the employer is seeking.
- Align your skills and experience with the position requirements in the cover letter.
- Demonstrate your industry and company knowledge through the use of **industry-specific keywords**
- **Use a professional email account** and be sure to name your attached resume using your name, i.e. Last Name_Resume or First.Last_Resume.
- **Proofread, proofread, and proofread!** Errors are not professional.
- Have someone else read your letter before you send it.
- Use matching paper and fonts for the cover letter and resume if you are sending via mail or in person. This shows continuity and professionalism.

COVER LETTER EXAMPLE #1

Jane Smith
1234 Western Dr. Kalamazoo, MI 49009
jsmith@gmail.com
616-454-2610

March 15, 2018

Bob Brown, Professional Title Access Medical

Dear Mr. Brown:

I am a sales and business marketing major at Western Michigan University and I learned of the internship at Access Medical through Jane Baker at the WMU Business Internship Panel. Based upon the qualifications listed in Handshake, I am writing to express my interest in the position. Access Medical's commitment to meeting the needs of patients and caregivers, along with my interest in sales, marketing and helping others, make a great combination that will benefit your company.

I pride myself on being a self-motivated individual in all areas of my life, especially when learning new things. For example, in order to learn more about my major, I was selected to be a part of the Business Externship Program, a collegiate level job shadow opportunity. I spent several days at Enterprise Rent-A-Car, learning the role of their sales managers and taking part in several client meetings and calls. I also pride myself on having a strong work ethic. This quality helped me receive two promotions to lead positions in my work at a local ice cream shop. I would utilize these qualities at Access Medical in order to learn the operations of a durable medical equipment company, and dedicate myself to the sales and marketing of your products.

I am confident that my professional and educational background, complemented by my strong work ethic and self-motivation, would be great assets to Access Medical. Although the attached resume outlines my accomplishments, a personal interview would be the only way to fully illustrate why I am an excellent fit for the position. Please contact me through my email jsmith@gmail.com or at my phone number 616-454-2610 at your convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely,

Jane Smith

COVER LETTER EXAMPLE #2

Ryan Connors

88011 Wilson Avenue
Walker, MI 49534

connorsry@gmail.com
616-228-7622

September 14, 2014

Charlotte Brooks
Preschool Director
GRCC Laboratory Preschool
227 East Fulton
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Dear Ms. Brooks,

Hello, my name is Ryan Connors, and I am pursuing an Associate of Applied Arts and Sciences degree in Child Development at Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC). I am writing in regard to the Toddler Room assistant position available in the Preschool, which I found a posting for in the GRCC Student Employment Services job database. I highly enjoy working with children, and being able to use my skills at the GRCC Preschool would be an exciting opportunity.

It is through the babysitting position I began last summer that I discovered my passion for child development. Caring for two children at once made me realize just how essential it is that each child gets the attention she requires in order to thrive and develop. Although it was necessary for me to pay special attention to the baby with Down Syndrome in order to promote her development, it quickly became clear that the other child still required an immense amount of care and consideration in order to learn and grow as well. Additionally, I needed to understand that both girls learned differently and that I would need to adapt my teaching and caring techniques in order to best influence both children. At the GRCC Preschool, I will use this same adaption technique in order to ensure that I am reaching and influencing each child I work with in a way that best suites each individual's needs.

I am extremely interested in meeting with you to discuss the Toddler Room position further. I can best be contacted through my email connorsry@gmail.com or at my phone number 616-228-7622 during the afternoon. If I do not hear from you within two weeks, I will follow up through email regarding my interest in the position. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Ryan Connors