

# COVER LETTER

Issue 2 in Series



## Customize your cover letter:

- ✓ Address your letter to an individual, rather than the generic "To Whom It May Concern"
- ✓ Include information specific to the organization you are applying to: company projects, products, business ventures, press information, etc.
- ✓ When responding to a want ad, use words included in the ad and relate them to your skills.
- ✓ Show that you understand the unique issue faced by the organization by stating related facts and offering other information.

## FOLLOW-UP

After you send the cover letter and resume, a rule of thumb is that you should call to follow-up 7-10 days later. During this call, inquire as to whether the letter and resume have been received, if any additional information is needed from you, and what the next steps in the decision making process will be. This will ensure that your resume is part of the candidate pool as well as draw attention to your application and indicate your high level of interest and enthusiasm for the position.

## Contact Us

**Advising & Academic Success  
Center of Garrett College**

Room 519

301-387-3715

career@garrettcollege.edu

www.garrettcollege.edu/aasc

## DO I NEED A COVER LETTER?

While the resume relates your skills, abilities and your general qualifications to an employer, the cover letter allows you to be more specific and to let the employer know what kind of person you are. It is the initial contact between you and the employer and should be used whenever you send your resume (which is most of the time) to a prospective employer, whether it be by U.S. mail, email or fax. An effective cover letter indicates your seriousness of intent, your strongest assets as required by the company, your enthusiasm for the job, your professionalism – in general, it makes a good first impression and lets them know that you believe yourself to be a well-qualified candidate.

Cover letters must always be typed and should be no longer than one page. Use a good quality paper for printing; the same as your resume. Similar design, fonts, and styles should also be used. Do not staple your cover letter to your resume – send in the same envelope or as attachments in an email. Remember to sign your cover letter above your typed name.

## COVER LETTER FORMAT

Cover letters should follow normal business letter formats. Such letters always include – in more or less this order – your return address, the date, the name of the receiver and his/her full mailing address, a salutation ("Dear so-and-so"), 3-4 paragraphs that market you as a qualified candidate and show your interest in the position, and close with room for your signature above your typed name.

*Consider the APET format and order for your paragraphs:*

### A - Awareness

- How did you learn about the position?
- A catchy, personal statement about your skills or the company.
- Refer to the resume included.

### P - Parallel

- How you match the educational requirements.
- How you match the skill requirements.
- How you match other requirements (use words from the job description).
- Give examples of how you are prepared to succeed on this job.

### E - Enthusiasm

- Give a statement about the company's reputation and how wonderful it is.
- Include information that shows your high level of enthusiasm for the job.

### T - Thank You

- Thank the employer for his/her time.
- Indicate how and when you can be reached.
- Consider stating that you will make a follow-up call within a certain period of time.

## COVER LETTER SAMPLE

Below is a sample cover letter of a student who will be graduating in the near future. See, within the sections of the letter, how the author has met the APET format recommendations discussed in the previous page; awareness, parallel, enthusiasm, and thank you.

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961 Mosser Road  
McHenry, MD 21541

August 15, 2015

Mr. Craig Allen  
T. Rowe Price Associates, Inc.  
100 East Pratt Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Mr. Allen:

In this month's issue of *The Financial News*, I noticed your ad for a Financial Sales Trainee. Please know that I am greatly interested in this position and am forwarding my resume for your consideration.

In May, I will graduate from Garrett College with an Associate's degree in Business Administration. My interest in business started in Junior Achievement while in high school and developed further through a variety of sales and retail positions in college. Finance has always been of interest to me, and my internship with a local bank convinced me to pursue a career in financial sales. While researching the leading companies in this industry, T. Rowe Price emerged as having a strong market position, an excellent training program, and a reputation for excellence in customer service. In short, your company provides the kind of professional environment I seek and the reputation for quality with which I want to be associated.

As you can see on my resume, my education and work experience match the qualifications you seek in your financial sales trainees, but they don't tell the whole story. I know from customer and supervisor feedback that I have the interpersonal skills and motivation needed to build a successful career in financial sales. And, my relatively extensive experience gives me confidence in my career direction and my abilities to perform competently.

I know how busy you must be, but I would very much appreciate a few minutes of your time. I will call you during the week of September 1 to discuss the employment possibilities. In the meantime, if you need to contact me, my cell phone number is 301-555-1234. Please leave a message if I am not available, and I will return your call.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you in the very near future.

Sincerely,

*Christine S. Watson*

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