

## **Chapter 5: How to write a perfect Cover Letter**

When sending someone your CV, you should also send them a cover letter. The only times you wouldn't is when a recruitment agency is sending it to companies on your behalf or when you are attending a career fair. This is because you do not have details about the company or the role to which you are targeting your cover letter.

In every other circumstance, you should write a tailored letter to the company, using the opportunity to highlight why you are a strong candidate for the job and to convey your knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm. It should be no longer than 1 A4 side and should emphasize rather than duplicate the information in your CV.

Typically, a reviewer will read the resume first and then return to the resume and cover letter if they are interested. They can hold more weight in certain fields and positions, especially ones where written communication is important. Cover letters shouldn't be a list of everything on their resume but instead, it is used to TELL THEIR STORY. Students might talk about how they became interested in this field: growing up visiting national parks and that sparked their interest in forestry, perhaps they had a family member struggling with addiction, and that led to their passion for social work, or maybe they grew up tinkering with computers and have turned it into a career field. Also, maybe they knew they wanted to study philosophy and a guest speaker sparked an interest in medical ethics which led to a summer internship in the field or their engineering curriculum included classes on rapid tooling and prototyping with hands-on projects. They might go into detail on a specific experience such as tutoring a third grader in reading and the challenges and successes they faced, or a time they lead a group project for a class as a way to demonstrate their leadership style. These stories bring out their work characteristics, values, and personality, which is what makes them stand out as an individual.

### **WHAT IS A COVER LETTER?**

A complement to your resume

- Cover letters are a narrative complement to your resume.
- A brief one-page document that helps expand on the experiences you showcased in your resume.
- Highlights your motivations in applying for the position and why you want to work with this specific organization.

## **STRUCTURE OF COVER LETTER**

Your Name

Your Address

Today's Date

Their Name

Their Title

Their Organization

Their Address

Greeting,

Introduction Paragraph

Body Paragraph(s)

Closing Paragraph

Salutation,

Your Name

## EXAMPLE OF COVER LETTER:

Paws T. Catamount  
797 Western Lane  
Cullowhee, NC 28150

October 6, 2018

Jane Smith  
Internship Coordinator  
Allegion  
11819 N. Pennsylvania Street  
Carmel, IN 46032

Dear Ms. Smith,

I would like to apply to your summer internship for engineering students in 2019. I was made aware of this opportunity through the company's website, as I searched for internship opportunities that would allow me to utilize my training in mechanical engineering while continuing to grow as a professional in this field.

I am currently working towards my Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering at Western Carolina University. I am also a member of the Honors College for which I am conducting an independent research project in understanding Matlab and its applications to Mechanical Engineering.

My academic program at the university strongly emphasizes preparation to enter into the professional workplace. Our curriculum consists of many projects that are collaborative, involve practicing accurate documentation of work, and end with a presentation in front of colleagues and peers. Additionally, I have been an active participant in DegreePlus, a campus-wide program designed to teach transferable skills. As a participant, I focused on growing my professionalism and leadership skills by participating in workshops and events on campus focused in these areas. With this in mind, I have come to seek an internship at Allegion in order to utilize these skills in a workplace context.

I am eager to learn about new technologies currently being developed in the workplace, and I feel that there is no better place to do that than an internship position with Allegion. Security is a rapidly changing field and I believe I will gain the skills necessary in order to compete in the workforce.

I am very grateful you are considering my application for your internship position. If you have any questions, you can contact me at (555) 555-5555. You can also reach me at my email at paws1@catamount.wcu.edu. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paws Catamount

## **TOP TEN MISTAKES MADE ON A JOB OR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS**

1. Forget to include your name and/or address!
2. Submit an incomplete application.
3. Be rude or abusive to the judges.
4. Submit a dirty application.
5. Apply when you do not meet their minimum requirements.
6. Send it “postage due”.
7. Mail the envelope but forget to put the application in it.
8. Submit inappropriate supporting documentation.
9. No one can read your application.
10. Spelling errors!