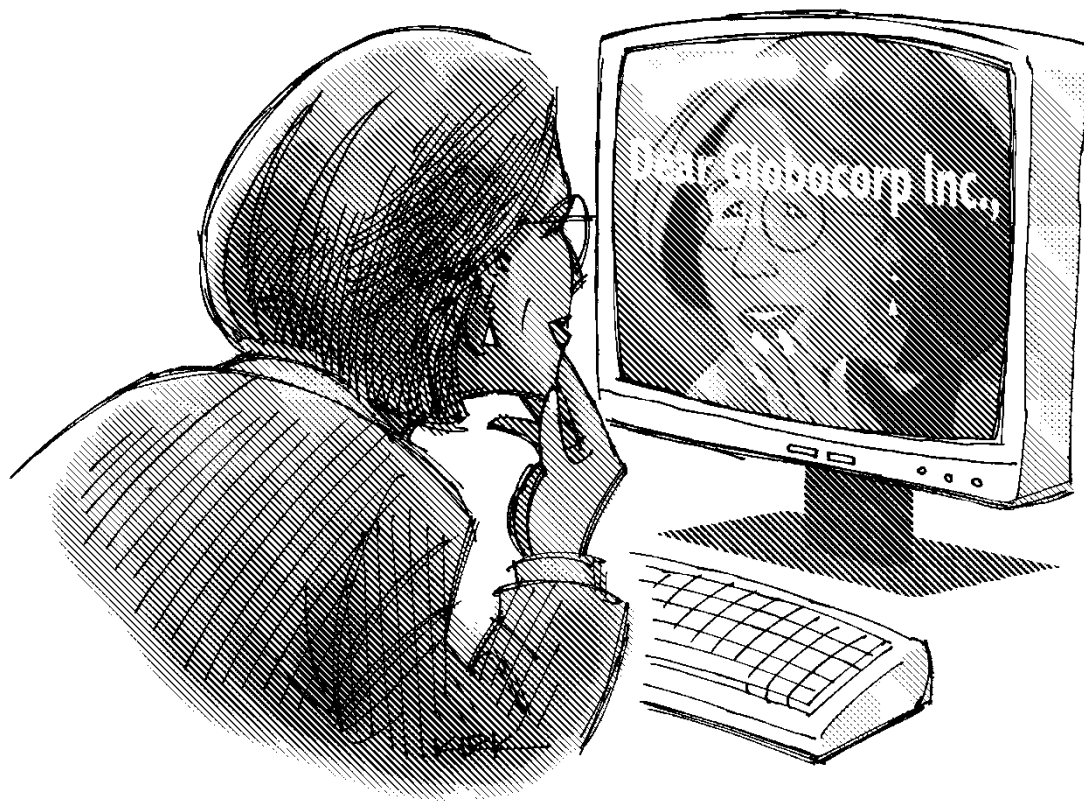


# How to Write a COVER LETTER

By Eric R. Anderson



Provided by Capital University Career Development  
Blackmore Library, Second Floor ~ 614-236-6606  
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Ask. Think. Lead.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>UNDERSTANDING COVER LETTERS</b> .....	3
--	---

## **TWO MAIN TYPES OF COVER LETTERS**

<b>Letter of Application</b> .....	4
Use when applying for an <i>advertised</i> job opening	

Basic Example .....	4
---------------------	---

Letter of Application Content.....	5-6
------------------------------------	-----

Format Rules and Digital Signature .....	7-8
--	-----

<b>Follow-up email</b> .....	9
Use when you haven't yet heard from the employer	

Example with a sample job posting .....	10-13
---	-------

<b>Letter of Inquiry</b> .....	14-18
Use when applying for jobs that are <i>not</i> advertised	

Letter of Inquiry Content.....	14
--------------------------------	----

Examples .....	16-18
----------------	-------

## **ADVANCED COVER LETTERS**

With experience, you can try this less structured format .....	19
--	----

## **SENDING COVER LETTERS**

Emailing (attaching) and Uploading cover letters & resumes.....	20
---	----

# UNDERSTANDING COVER LETTERS

## A COVER LETTER...

- Is always included with emailed, online, or mailed résumés. It is NOT used when you “show up” in person with your résumé, whether in someone’s office or at a job fair. In those cases, YOU are your cover letter; you’ll say the same information out loud. It would be weird for them to read the letter while you stand there.
- Highlights *specific* information from your resume and background that applies to a *specific* posted position (see *letter of application p. 4*) or a *specific* “possibly open” (but not posted) position (*letter of inquiry, p. 14*).

## STEPS for WRITING a STANDARD LETTER OF APPLICATION

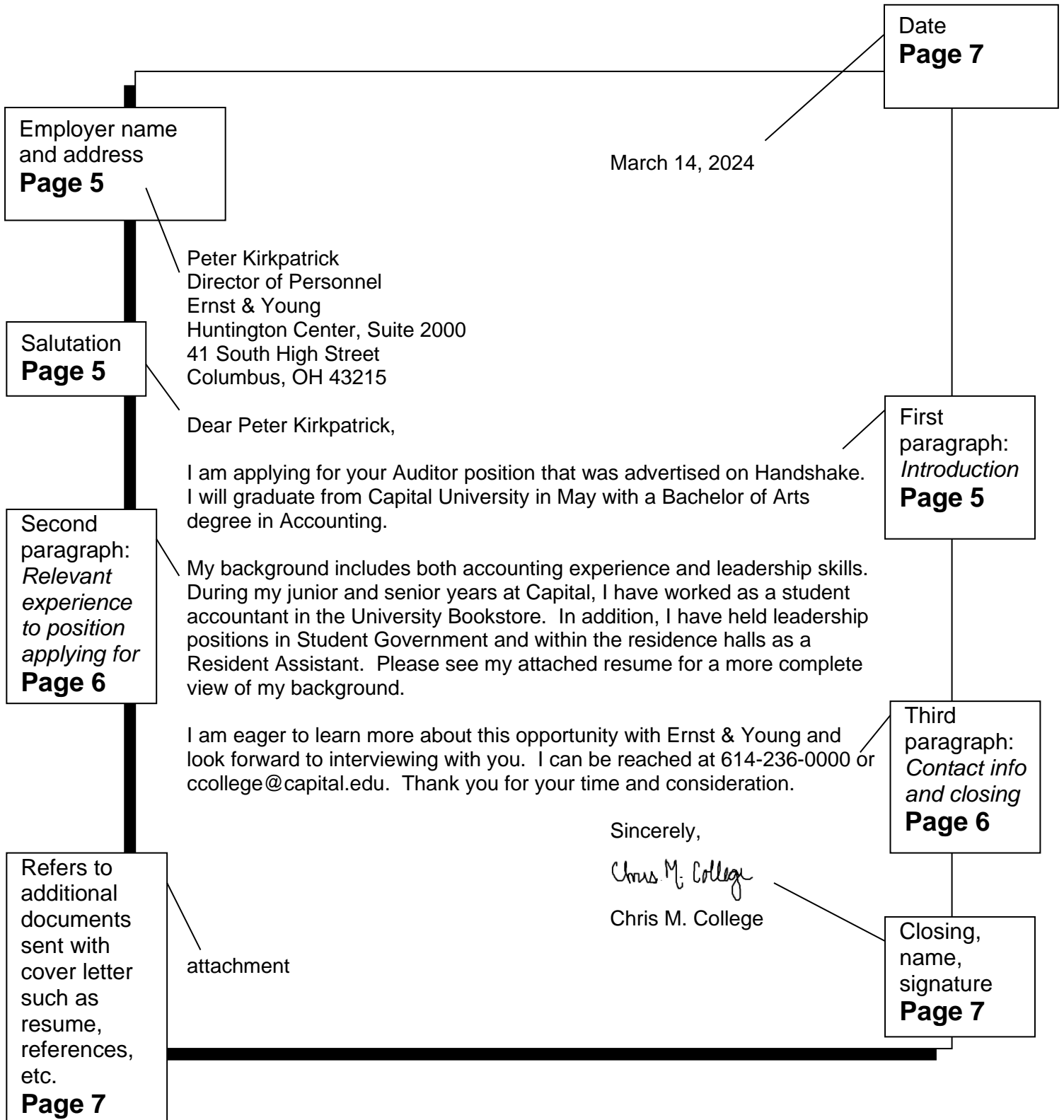
Most of the time, you will be writing a letter to apply for a job or internship that has a written position description from a job/internship posting outlining the responsibilities and qualifications of that job or internship. When writing a letter in this situation, follow these steps:

1. Use this booklet to gain a better understanding of the general content and format of your cover letter.
2. Read through your job/internship posting so you know the qualifications and responsibilities of the position.
3. Compare the job/internship position description to your resume to determine the qualifications you have that match the position qualifications.
4. Write your letter. *Be sure to format your letter using the examples.*
5. Drop by our office or schedule an appointment so we can review your cover letter with you before you submit it for your job/internship application.

## ALSO REMEMBER: CUSTOMIZE EVERY COVER LETTER

- Always write a **personalized** cover letter for **each** job.
- Customize your “sales pitch,” linking your experience, demonstrated skills, course work, and accomplishments to the *specific* requirements (or job duties) of the open position that are revealed in the job posting.

# LETTER OF APPLICATION: BASIC EXAMPLE



# LETTER OF APPLICATION: CONTENT

**Remember** that you are *responding to a posted job position* in this letter. That will guide some of your text. Make sure that you comment on specific qualifications that are listed in the advertisement.

## THE EMPLOYER'S ADDRESS, NAME AND SALUTATION

With advertised openings, you will sometimes be instructed to send your information to an office, or a title, such as the Director of Human Resources. In this case, you need not find the name of the individual to whom you are writing. You can address the letter to "Dear Director," or "Dear Human Resources Department," *or you can simply omit the salutation (Dear \_\_\_\_\_,) from the letter.*

Still, if you are provided the name of the appropriate person, it is easier. Note that if the gender of the person is unclear, your salutation should omit the Mr. or Ms. title (i.e., "Dear Shannon Kirkpatrick,").

## THE FIRST PARAGRAPH

Length: Two or three sentences.

Content: This brief paragraph introduces who you are and why you are writing to the employer.

- Identify the position for which you are applying and indicate how you heard about the opening (website, contact person, etc.).
- Make clear why the position is interesting to you and why you are qualified (Are you graduating? Is your major related to the position? Do you have relevant experience? Is this position a good transition for you in job-level or location?).

**For example (if the position relates to your major, and you're not a graduating senior):**

1. I am applying for your part-time sales position which was posted on Handshake. I am currently a sophomore, and am majoring in Marketing.

**Or, if the position relates to your major, and you ARE a graduating senior:**

2. I am applying for your Management Trainee position which was posted on Handshake. You indicate a need for a recent graduate with a background in business and sales. I will graduate in May with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, and I have held part-time sales positions throughout college.
3. During the last two years, my editing position with our school newspaper has provided me with experience related to the Proofreader position which was advertised on your company website. I will graduate from Capital University in May with a Bachelor's degree in English, and I plan to enter the field of publishing.

**If the position doesn't relate to your major, but you have related employment experience, you will refer to your experience instead of your degree:**

4. I am applying for your Customer Service Representative position which was advertised on LinkedIn. I have one year of customer service experience, and am interested in working within the insurance field.
5. I am interested in the Loan Officer position with Orgo-gro. Mark Muggli, an analyst with your company, recently informed me of two openings in this division. I have two years of experience in banking, including significant exposure to loans and mortgages.

## THE SECOND PARAGRAPH

Length: Three to five sentences.

Content: In this paragraph, you will emphasize a match between the skills you possess and those which are required by the employer. Use the job posting to guide your writing and include:

- Your qualifications for the position, as they relate to those listed by the employer. These qualifications will probably be a combination of your education and your work experience, so you will probably refer to current or previous employment, specific courses, aspects of jobs or internships, etc., that relate to this position or are listed in the qualifications.
- If there's a long list of qualifications, you don't need to mention every single one. You might write something like, "I have developed a range of communication, technical, and administrative skills during my three internships." Or you might even begin with a statement like, "My background includes experience related to all of the qualifications listed in your position description."
- Make some reference to your attached or enclosed resume (pay attention to whether you are *attaching* through email or *enclosing* through US Mail). Some options are:
  1. My attached resume will give you a better view of my skills and abilities.
  2. Please see my enclosed resume for more information.
  3. Please see my attached resume for a more complete view of my background and qualifications.

If you have both *academic qualifications* and *career-related work experience*, you may want to separate this paragraph into two paragraphs. By doing this, you can focus on each of these subjects individually.

## THE THIRD PARAGRAPH

Length: Two or three sentences.

Content: This is the paragraph in which you tell the employer how to get in touch with you, and thank the person for taking time to consider your application. Some examples are:

1. Should you need additional information, you can reach me at 614-236-5000 or jsmith@capital.edu. Thank you for your consideration; I look forward to hearing from you soon.
2. I am available for an interview during (list dates or months or whenever you are available). You can reach me at (614) 555-1212 from 3:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. I look forward to hearing from you.
3. I believe that my student teaching experience and academic background will be a benefit to the Wellington School. Should you need additional information, you can reach me at (614) 555-1234. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

## "ATTACHMENT" VS. "ENCLOSURE"

Usually you send a cover letter along with your resume, and sometimes you may have additional documents to send (such as a list of references, reference letters, writing samples, etc.). The word "attachment" at the bottom of the letter is used to indicate there is a document (or documents) you are sending with your cover letter.

When sending your documents...

By **EMAIL** or **ONLINE APPLICATIONS**: Use the word "attachment" or "attachments."

(rarely) By **MAIL**: Use the word "enclosure" or "enclosures" at the bottom of your letter

When sending:

- Only your resume and cover letter, write: attachment OR enclosure
- When there are more documents than your resume, indicate the number of documents you are sending in addition to your cover letter.

For example, if you send your resume and list of references, write: "attachments (2)" OR "enclosures (2)."

## FORMAT: THE DATE & THE CLOSING

When writing a standard cover letter, the date (on the top) and your "closing" (near the bottom of the letter) should both be about two-thirds of the way across the page, like the example to the right.

To do this, start by typing the date and "closing" text on the left margin of the page.

Then, use the indent button or the "Tab" key to move the date over about two-thirds across the page. Do this again to move your "closing" across the page.

Make sure that you align both the date **and** your closing to the same point on the page.

The diagram illustrates a cover letter layout with a vertical dotted line indicating alignment. A box at the top left points to the date "March 14, 2023" with the text "The date is aligned like this". Another box at the bottom left points to the signature "Chris M. College" with the text "Your 'closing' is aligned to the same point". The cover letter text includes: "Peter Kirkpatrick, Director of Personnel, Ernst & Young, Huntington Center, Suite 2000, 41 South High Street, Columbus, OH 43215", "Dear Peter Kirkpatrick.", "I am applying for your Auditor position that was advertised on Handshake. I will graduate from Capital University in May with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Accounting.", "My background includes both accounting experience and leadership skills. During my junior and senior years at Capital, I have worked as a student accountant in the University Bookstore. In addition, I have held leadership positions in Student Government and within the residence halls as a Resident Assistant. Please see my attached resume for a more complete view of my background.", "I am eager to learn more about this opportunity with Ernst & Young and look forward to interviewing with you. I can be reached at 614-238-0000 or college@capital.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.", "Sincerely, Chris M. College, Chris M. College"

## **SIGNING COVER LETTERS**

You don't *need* to sign the letter between “Sincerely” and your typed name, but it’s simple to add the signature in the Word document with your iPad and Apple Pencil, and then convert to a PDF. If you have the time, it’s a good idea. It can make you look different from other candidates.

### **Create the signature for an emailed cover letter using your iPad**

#### **OPEN YOUR COVER LETTER IN WORD**

- You’ll need to use the official version of Word that allows editing on your iPad. You have access to this version through your Capital account.

#### **SELECT “DRAW” FROM THE OPTIONS ON THE TOP OF THE SCREEN**

- Choose your “pen”
- Select width and color
- Make sure there is space for a signature between “Sincerely” and your typed name
- Sign your name using your Apple Pencil

#### **EXPORT YOUR CHANGES TO PDF**

- Click the three dots in the upper right corner of the screen
- Select Export, and choose PDF



# LETTER OF APPLICATION: FOLLOW UP

If you respond to an advertised opening, you can expect to wait anywhere from a week to more than a month for a response. Why? Human Resource departments are very busy, and sometimes things get put on the back burner.

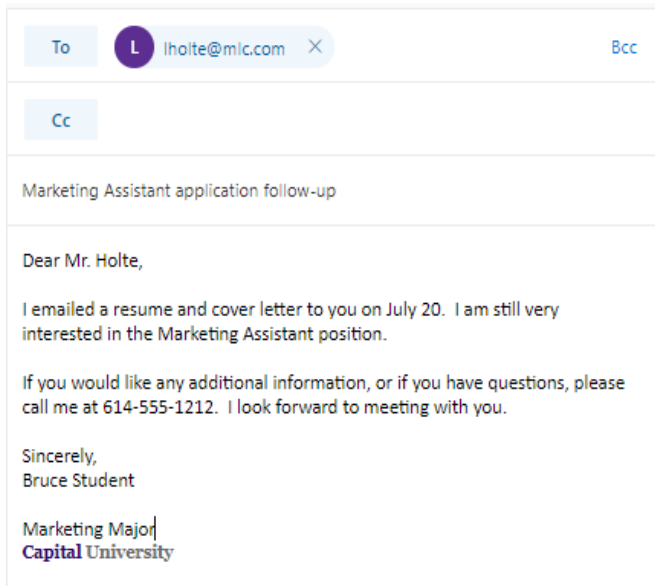
By the second week, you're feeling as if no one likes you and you're wondering if you should call to inquire about the status of your file. In general, resist the temptation to call. There are hundreds of resumes along with yours, and if each of those people called, it would get annoying. An exception might be the fields of sales and journalism, in which you are expected to be more aggressive in your approach. Some sales recruiters say that they *only* consider those who persistently call!

Instead, you might want to send a follow-up email or letter. This type of correspondence is appropriate in two circumstances:

1. If something new came up (like you'll be gone for a while and won't be able to interview during that time).
2. If you simply want to remind them that you are still interested, without being pushy. It's a nice way of ensuring that they received your resume and cover letter while giving them a positive impression of you.

Send an email or letter that sounds something like this:

## EMAIL



## MAILED LETTER

Date
Lars Holte Director of College Recruitment Midwest Lefse Commission 235 Krumkake Avenue Columbus, Ohio 43221
Dear Lars Holte,
I mailed a resume and cover letter to you on July 20. I am still very interested in the Marketing Assistant position.
If you would like any additional information, or if you have any questions, please call me at 614-555-7896. I look forward to meeting with you.
Sincerely,  (Sign your name)  Your Name

# LETTER OF APPLICATION WRITING PROCESS: A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

## Here's how your letter of application develops:

Use job posting to figure out key qualifications and responsibilities the position requires.

Compare those key qualifications/responsibilities to the experiences you have on your résumé.

**Kohl's Product Management Intern (Menomonee Falls, WI)**

**Kohl's Position Description**  
As a Product Management intern you will have the opportunity to work within the Product Development Office, learning all aspects of a corporate private brand merchandising career.

**Primary responsibilities include:**

- Learning Kohl's culture and market position
- Understanding the Product Development process as it relates to buying, design and sourcing
- Considering marketplace factors including climates, trends, assortments and regional locations and incorporating these needs into the merchandise line
- Using competitive shopping as a tool to analyze trends, pricing and assortments of various retailers
- Managing a time and action calendar to ensure product development milestones and deadlines are maintained
- Collaborating with color, trend, cad artists, technical and design teams, sourcing, merchants, and other support teams to create a private brand merchandise assortment
- Following the entire private brand development process, from concept to finished product
- Analyzing the results with retail sales information and reporting systems
- Learning line building techniques, sales forecasting, gross margin planning and merchandising concepts
- Communicating with overseas vendors for merchandise integrity
- Shadowing a product manager to learn the tasks they complete on a day by day basis
- Developing a final project by researching a specific area or opportunity within the Product Development department
- Presenting final project to members of your department

**FORWARD COVER LETTER, RESUME, & PORTFOLIO IN THE FOLLOWING FORMAT:**  
S:\G\15 Kent State University Mail\INTERNSHIP: KOHL'S-Product Management (Menomonee Falls, WI)  
JOE\_KOHLSPM.PDF-COVER LETTER & RESUME  
JOE\_KOHLSPM.PDF-PORTFOLIO

**Preferred Qualifications**

- Strong analytical and critical thinking skills
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Ability and drive to develop retail business knowledge
- Ability to work as a part of a team and interact effectively with others

**Internship Experience**

- Located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- 10-week Paid Internship
- Training Classes
- Senior-Level exposure
- Final Project
- Summer Housing provided
- Transportation to and from work provided
- Sponsored events to show you Milwaukee



**Kimberly Student**  
555 Runway Drive  
Boh, Ohio 43006  
KStudent@capital.edu  
(614) 555-1212

**Objective** An internship in retail product management

**Education** **Capital University**, Columbus, Ohio  
Bachelor of Arts, May 2016  
Major: Leadership & Management

**Relevant Experience** **Sales and Floorset Associate**, June 2014-Present  
**THE LIMITED**, Columbus Ohio

- Assist in merchandise selection
- Ensure customer satisfaction
- Target and review daily sales goals
- Develop visual floor set displays

**Merchandising and Sales Intern**, Academic year 2012-13  
**WHOLLY CRAFT**

- Arranged window and visual merchandising displays
- Assessed inventory
- Contributed to product development
- Assisted with trade shows
- Launched final craft marketing project

**Design and Merchandising Intern**, Academic year 2012-13  
**LOCAL DESIGNER, AMY D**

- Assisted in sewing designers products
- Packaged designer's merchandise, delivered by strict deadlines
- Collaborated with potential carriers about quantity of products wanted in store

**Additional Experience** **Secretary and Event Assistant**, Academic year 2014-2015  
**THE HILLEL AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY**

- Assisted and arranged visual displays for Hillel events
- Completed daily office tasks

**Technology Camp Participant Intern**, Summers 2009 and 2010  
**SUMMER YOUTH CAMP INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

- Learned about web-development, computer programming and software use
- Participated in web design contest as appointed group leader
- Launched website for Bethany Presbyterian Church located in Columbus, Ohio

**Special Skills** Bilingual (Spanish)  
Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, Microsoft Office

Write your cover letter to explain how your experiences meet the position's requirements and responsibilities.

September 25, 2015

Ms. Jane Doe  
Human Resources Director  
Kohl's Corporate  
N56 W17000 Ridgewood Drive  
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin 53051

Dear Ms. Doe,

I am writing to express my interest in your product management internship position for the summer of 2016. Kent State's internship program manager, Hillary Stone recently informed me about the opening. I am currently a sophomore majoring in business at Capital University.

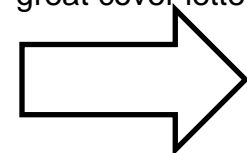
During the last two years, my employment and internship experiences have exposed me to several aspects of the retail industry. These experiences, ranging from pricing and assessing inventory to sewing apparel, have allowed me greater involvement in the industry. In particular, through my experience as a floor set associate at The Limited, I have viewed the entire development process from merchandising to sales. I have also learned about collaborative team sales analysis at The Limited, where we wirelessly discuss strategies to ensure that our clients' store experience is excellent. The collaboration continues after every two-hour segment, when the sales team meets together, critically evaluating the results of our customer interactions and reviewing our sales goals. These experiences, along with my experiences in additional work environments, have allowed me to participate in a range of roles, and I would like to expand my skills further while working for Kohl's Corporate.

For a more complete view of my merchandise and retail experience, I have attached my resume. I am excited about the possibility of working for Kohl's over the summer. I am ready for new challenging opportunities that can help me grow professionally and personally. Should you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to reach me at (614) 555-1212 or by e-mail at kstudent@capital.edu. I am available for an interview at your convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
  
Kimberly Student

attachment

See a real example of how a position description and resume can be used to write a great cover letter



# COVER LETTER WRITING PROCESS:

## STEP 1: READ THROUGH THE POSITION DESCRIPTION AND UNDERLINE PORTIONS THAT ALIGN WITH YOUR SKILLS

### Kohl's Product Management Intern (Menomonee Falls, WI)

#### Kohl's Position Description

As a Product Management intern you will have the opportunity to work within the Product Development Office, learning all aspects of a corporate private brand merchandising career.

#### Primary responsibilities include:

- Learning Kohl's culture and market position
- Understanding the Product Development process as it relates to buying, design and sourcing
- Considering marketplace factors-including climates, trends, assortments and regional locations and incorporating these needs into the merchandise line
- Using competitive shopping as a tool to analyze trends, pricing and assortments of various retailers
- Managing a time and action calendar to ensure product development milestones and deadlines are maintained
- Collaborating with color, trend, cad artists, technical and design teams, sourcing, merchants, and other support teams to create a private brand merchandise assortment
- Following the entire private brand development process, from concept to finished product
- Analyzing the results with retail sales information and reporting systems
- Learning line building techniques, sales forecasting, gross margin planning and merchandising concepts
- Communicating with overseas vendors for merchandise integrity
- Shadowing a product manager to learn the tasks they complete on a day by day basis
- Developing a final project by researching a specific area or opportunity within the Product Development department
- Presenting final project to members of your department

FORWARD COVER LETTER; RESUME; & PORTFOLIO IN THE FOLLOWING FORMAT:

9/6/15 Kent State University Mail-INTERNSHIP: KOHL'S-Product Management (Menomonee Falls, WI)

JDOE\_KOHLSPM.PDF-COVER LETTER & RESUME

JDOE\_KOHLSPM.PDF-PORTFOLIO

#### Preferred Qualifications

- Strong analytical and critical thinking skills
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Ability and drive to develop retail business knowledge
- Ability to work as a part of a team and interact effectively with others

#### Internship Experience

- Located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- 10-week Paid Internship
- Training Classes
- Senior-Level exposure
- Final Project
- Summer Housing provided
- Transportation to and from work provided
- Sponsored events to show you Milwaukee

Read Kimberly Student's cover letter on the next page to see how she directly connects her previous experience with these underlined portions of the position description.

Through her well-written cover letter, Kimberly demonstrates her verbal and written communication skills.

**STEP 2: MAKE SURE YOUR RÉSUMÉ REFLECTS YOUR COVER LETTER  
(WITHOUT SAYING EXACTLY WHAT YOUR COVER LETTER SAID)**

**Kimberly Student**

KStudent@capital.edu  
(614) 555-1212

**OBJECTIVE**

An internship in retail product management

**EDUCATION**

**Capital University**, Columbus, Ohio  
Bachelor of Arts, May 2024  
Major: Leadership & Management

**RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

**Sales and Floorset Associate**, June 2022-Present  
THE LIMITED, Columbus Ohio

- Assist in merchandise selection
- Ensure customer satisfaction
- Target and review daily sales goals
- Develop visual floor set displays

**Merchandising and Sales Intern**, Academic year 2020-21  
WHOLLY CRAFT

- Arranged window and visual merchandising displays
- Assessed inventory
- Contributed to product development
- Assisted with trade shows
- Launched final craft marketing project

**Design and Merchandising Intern**, Academic year 2019-20  
LOCAL DESIGNER, AMY D

- Assisted in sewing designers' products
- Packaged designer's merchandise, delivered by strict deadlines
- Collaborated with potential carriers about quantity of products wanted in store

**ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Secretary and Event Assistant**, Academic year 2021-2022  
THE HILLEL AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

- Assisted and arranged visual displays for Hillel events
- Completed daily office tasks

**Technology Camp Participant/Intern**, Summers 2018 and 2019  
SUMMER YOUTH CAMP INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- Learned about web development, computer programming, and software use
- Participated in web design contest as appointed group leader
- Launched website for Bethany Presbyterian Church located in Columbus, Ohio

**SPECIAL SKILLS**

Bilingual (Spanish)  
Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, Microsoft Office

**Kimberly emphasizes relevant experience to the position in this section of her résumé.**

**She also does not use the same wording of her responsibilities in her cover letter as she does for her bullet points in her résumé.**

**Notice in her cover letter on the next page, Kimberly does not mention every position she's had – that's okay! She highlights her most relevant experience and indicates that her resume provides more information on additional experiences.**

**STEP 3: WRITE YOUR LETTER – BE SURE TO CONNECT YOUR EXPERIENCE TO THE POSITION DESCRIPTION**

March 14, 2024

Jane Doe  
Human Resources Director  
Kohl's Corporate  
N56 W17000 Ridgewood Drive  
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin 53051

**Note the highlighted phrases that address parts of the position description for which Kimberly is qualified.**

Dear Jane Doe,

I am writing to express my interest in your product management summer internship position. Kent State's internship program manager, Hillary Stone recently informed me about the opening. I am currently a junior majoring in business at Capital University.

During the last two years, my employment and internship experiences have exposed me to several aspects of the retail industry. These experiences, ranging from pricing and assessing inventory to sewing apparel, have allowed me greater involvement in the industry. In particular, through my experience as a floor set associate at The Limited, I have viewed the entire development process from merchandising to sales. I have also learned about collaborative team sales analysis at The Limited, where we wirelessly discuss strategies to ensure that our clients' store experience is excellent. The collaboration continues after every two-hour segment, when the sales team meets together, critically evaluating the results of our customer interactions and reviewing our sales goals. These experiences, along with my experiences in additional work environments, have allowed me to participate in a range of roles, and I would like to expand my skills further while working for Kohl's Corporate.

For a more complete view of my merchandise and retail experience, I have attached my resume. I am excited about the possibility of working for Kohl's over the summer. I am ready for new challenging opportunities that can help me grow professionally and personally. Should you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to reach me at (614) 555-1212 or by e-mail at kstudent@capital.edu. I am available for an interview at your convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Student

attachment

# LETTER OF INQUIRY

**Purpose:** In this type of letter, you inquire about the *possibility* of available positions. Since you are not responding to an advertisement, the first paragraph will not make reference to one, as it did in the letter of application. Instead you will want to refer to what has prompted you to write the letter - an article you have read in the paper, someone you have talked with in the field, personal knowledge that the company hires people with your qualifications, etc... The second paragraph will probably take on a slightly more general tone, since you will not be responding to specific listed qualifications. Finally, you will need to be more assertive in your approach. This is most obvious in the last paragraph.

**NOTE:** In most cases, this type of letter will be used when someone has referred you or if you know there is a job available through your networking or research. This is not to be used for a mass mailing of letters and resumes.

**Format:** The basic pieces of the letter of inquiry are the same as a letter of application:

- The date
- The employer's name and title (if provided), organization, and address
- A greeting line (Dear \_\_\_\_\_,)
- Three paragraphs
- A closing with your name
- Indication of any attachments or enclosures

## THE EMPLOYER'S NAME

In a letter of inquiry, you should ALWAYS use a specific person's name. You'll call that person later, and you will have to ask for him or her. It is easy to get the name and title of the person to whom you should send your resume and cover letter, if you don't already have the employer's name.

You will have the most success if you call the main number for the company or organization and ask the person who answers the phone if he or she can give you the name (gender pronouns, if necessary) and title of the person to whom you would direct a letter regarding possible employment. Also ask for the spelling of the person's name.

You can also try to find the person's name by searching on LinkedIn.

## THE FIRST PARAGRAPH

**Length:** Three to four sentences.

**Content:** Instead of mentioning an advertisement, you will explain briefly why you are interested in working for this company and what has prompted your letter. These statements are important, as they provide the best opportunity for you to personalize the letter. In this paragraph you should explain:

- What position(s) you are applying for.
- Why they should consider you.
- What has prompted you to write the letter.
- Why you are interested in working for them.
- You may want to mention your current educational status, and month/year of graduation and/or if you already have experience in the field here.

## First Paragraph Examples:

1. I am writing to inquire about social work positions with the Franklin County Mental Health Board. I recently read an article in the Columbus Dispatch which indicated that you are seeking to establish several treatment teams to assist the mentally ill in managing their lives. I am excited about the possibility of securing one of these positions, because I am extremely interested in working with this population.
2. During a recent conversation with Professor Joe Fasby, my faculty advisor in the Accounting department at Capital University, we discussed the possibility of several upcoming openings for auditors at Ernst & Young. Professor Fasby has worked for Ernst & Young in the past and feels that my education and experience would make me a good match for this type of position. I will graduate from Capital University in May with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Accounting.

## THE SECOND PARAGRAPH

Length: Three to five sentences.

Content: This can be the same as the second paragraph in the letter of application (see page 6). The difference is that you are not responding to the qualifications of a specific position opening. Rather, you are giving the reader a general overview of your background. You are telling the reader what you think she or he wants to hear about you, based on the nature of the positions for which you are expressing an interest.

## THE THIRD PARAGRAPH

Length: Two to three sentences.

Content: This paragraph becomes more assertive than the third paragraph in the letter of application (see page 6). You *must* contact the person to whom you are writing the letter, since there is a very small chance that this person will rush to call you immediately after receiving your letter and resume.

### Examples:

1. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these positions with you. I will call during the week of April 10 to inquire further. If this is inconvenient, you can reach me by calling 614-555-2324 after 6:00 p.m. or by e-mail at college@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration.
2. I look forward to discussing summer internship opportunities with you. I can be reached at 614-555-2324. If I do not hear from you by February 8, I will call you to follow up on my interest.

These examples might seem pushy or forward to you. They might have been considered pushy if you indicated the date and time that you expected the person to be available for your phone call, but you're not doing that. Instead, you're providing a time frame, as well as an alternative to talking with you. That's being polite, not pushy.

# LETTER OF INQUIRY: EXAMPLE (Part One)

(Written as a response to the newspaper article below:)

## GRANTS WILL HELP COUNTY'S MENTALLY ILL

Grants totaling about \$1.2 million will help expand a program for county residents with severe and long-term mental illness, the Franklin County Mental Health Board said yesterday.

The board received \$825,472 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation of Princeton, N.J., and \$383,786 from the Ohio Department of Health.

An estimated 6,000 people in Franklin County suffer severe and long-term mental illness.

The Mental Health Board serves 525 through a program in which treatment teams help people manage their lives. The board has eight teams. It wants 32 teams of 3,000 more patients, board chair Pat Groseck said.

Teams are composed of nurses, social workers, and experts in medical benefits and housing.

**Notice in the cover letter on the next page the reference to this portion of the article.**



LETTER OF INQUIRY:  
EXAMPLE (Part Two)

March 15, 2024

Mary Sidewinder  
Office of Community Treatment  
Franklin County Mental Health Board  
447 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Mary Sidewinder,

I am writing to inquire about social work positions with the Franklin County Mental Health Board. I recently read an article in The Columbus Dispatch which indicated that you are seeking to establish a number of treatment teams to assist the mentally ill in managing their lives. I am excited about the possibility of securing one of these positions, because I am extremely interested in working with this population.

My combination of formal education (a Bachelor of Social Work degree) and extensive practical experience will enable me to be a productive member of your treatment team. My studies at Capital University provided me with a strong working knowledge of the social work field. My experience at Volunteer's Express has given me the opportunity to teach life management skills to clients. Please see my resume for further details concerning my additional social work experience.

Again, I am very interested in working for the Franklin County Mental Health Board, and I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these positions with you. I will call you next week to inquire further. If this is inconvenient, you can reach me by calling 614-555-4836 after 6:00 p.m. or by e-mail at [jformica@capital.edu](mailto:jformica@capital.edu). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Julie Formica

attachment

# LETTER OF INQUIRY: ADDITIONAL EXAMPLE

(Written as a response to a conversation with a faculty member.)

March 15, 2024

Peter Kirkpatrick  
Director of Personnel  
Ernst & Young  
Huntington Center, Suite 2000  
41 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6150

Dear Peter Kirkpatrick,

During a recent conversation with Professor Joe Fasby, my faculty advisor in the Accounting department at Capital University, we discussed the possibility of several upcoming openings for auditors at Ernst & Young. Professor Fasby has worked for Ernst & Young in the past and feels that my education and experience would make me a good match for this type of position. I will graduate from Capital University in May with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Accounting.

Professor Fasby has told me that your organization values both practical experience and leadership skills. During my junior and senior years at Capital, I have worked as a student accountant in the University bookstore. In addition, I have held leadership positions in the Student Government and within the residence halls as a Resident Assistant. Please see my attached resume for a more complete view of my background.

I am very interested to learn more about these positions at Ernst & Young and look forward to the possibility of interviewing with you. I will contact you next week to inquire further. If this is inconvenient for you, you can reach me by phone at 614-236-0000 or by e-mail at [ccollege@capital.edu](mailto:ccollege@capital.edu). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris M. College

attachment

# ADVANCED COVER LETTERS :

After you've written a few standard cover letters, consider this more conversational style.

March 14, 2024

Gail Giga  
Recruiting Coordinator  
Information Technology Department  
1234 Hard Drive  
New York, New York 10004

Dear Gail Giga,

I am a senior at Capital University in Ohio majoring in Computer Science with a minor in Accounting. I am interested in interviewing for an Information Technology (IT) Analyst position at Goldman, Sachs. Having spoken with a former Goldman Analyst, read your brochures and visited your web site, I believe that Goldman, Sachs is the right global investment bank for me.

I am interested in an IT Analyst position because I have really enjoyed my internship at the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC), where, for the last year, I have been the only intern at the 17-person IT department that provides computer support to over 2000 in-house customers. My additional course work in accounting and finance has exposed me to concepts of financial services, an area to which I now want to apply my computer-related skills.

With an analytical, yet service-oriented, background that includes working 40 hours every week while carrying a full course-load, I want to be an IT Analyst at Goldman, Sachs for two reasons. First, your 'technology is the business' idea appeals to me since I too value IT work not as a backstage operation but as a very important team-based part of Goldman's business. Second, in my spare time, along with colleagues and friends, I want to pursue community service in the New York area.

Ms. Giga, having seriously thought about being an IT Analyst in general and at Goldman, Sachs in particular, I would very much enjoy speaking with you further about the possibility of my being considered for an interview.

I have attached a copy of my resume and my transcript. I will call you soon to follow-up on this letter. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chip Cobol

attachments (2)

# SENDING COVER LETTERS

## E-MAILING and UPLOADING YOUR LETTER & RESUME

### E-mail subject line

Make sure that your subject line will make the employer want to read your email (and not delete it!). This is especially true for the letter of inquiry; in this case, you might want to use the name of the person who referred you (e.g., “Steve Mellum referred me”). Otherwise, you might include the name of the position (e.g., “Public Relations Intern application”).

### Attach your cover letter (DON'T write it in the body of the email)

The employer will often print your cover letter or will want to save it in a document folder. If it's in the body of the email, the formatting will look ugly, and create more work for the employer.

### Document format

When sending your resume and cover letter by email or uploading them for an online application, attach as a PDF (convert from Word, Google Docs, Pages, or Canva). Don't send a link to your Google Doc; it's inconvenient for the employer.

### Name your documents correctly:

Instead of sending your resume as “resume.pdf”, you should use **your name** in the document name (e.g., DaveStudent-resume.pdf). Name your resume file FOR YOUR AUDIENCE, not for you. Same for your cover letter.

### Option: send as one document:

Create one PDF that contains both your resume and cover letter. Open your cover letter PDF in Adobe and select “Combine Files” from the tools listed on the right side. Then just add your resume PDF and combine. Save your new combined document with a new name.

### Body of email

Regardless of the format of attached documents, in the **body** of the e-mail write a brief note like:

