
Cover Letter Writing

Make a Statement About Yourself

Employers consistently view good writing skills as a top priority when judging applicants. That's one of the reasons Old Dominion University places such a high value on its writing examination. You'll need to craft a cleverly written cover letter to compete in today's job market. A cover letter should accompany any resume you send to an employer. It introduces you and states how you found out about the position. It also explains how you are qualified and highlights the skills you possess. Lastly, it encourages the employer to refer to your resume. Use the same type of paper and header as your resume. Keep your cover letters clear and simple. Read it out loud to be sure that your writing flows properly.

A typical cover letter reads as follows:

Your name, address and date

Employer's name, title and address

Dear _____:

Paragraph 1: State your reason for writing; refer to the position you are seeking; state how you heard of the opening; prove that you have done some research on the company and position.

Paragraphs 2 & 3: Explain your interest in the job and how it matches with your career plans, skills, education and experience. **USE EXAMPLES FROM YOUR RESUME.** Prove that you are an ideal candidate.

Paragraph 4: Refer the reader to your resume. Close with a statement of what actions you will take next to set up an interview.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Enclosure

Sample Cover Letters

Alexander T. Smith

Current Address:
34 Argall Ave. Apt. 2
Norfolk, VA 23508
(757) 555-9653
ats100x@odu.edu

After December 17, 2005:
56 Bluffton Place
Richmond, VA 24593
(757) 555-3942
atsmith@aol.com

January 23, 2006

Mr. Mathew Phillips
Associate Director
The Martin Group
P.O. Box 906
Richmond, VA 24591

Dear Mr. Phillips:

I am writing to apply for a Legislative Internship with The Martin Group. I learned of the position while researching internship opportunities at the Career Management Center at Old Dominion University.

I have an in-depth knowledge of the history of Virginia and have been planning on a career in politics for over a decade. I first developed an interest in state-level politics while at Jefferson High School where I was involved in a lobbying effort to ensure freedom of the press for high school journalists. This interest has grown as my awareness of political and social issues increased through my college course work in History. In my history courses I have mastered research and writing skills, as well as the evaluation of complex situations.

Courses in public speaking and English have further developed my communication skills. As a member of the Old Dominion University Greek Judicial Board, I review student cases, issue decisions, and keep all cases confidential to protect students' rights. I also have seven years experience in desktop publishing and received a number of prestigious national honors in high school for my writing, editing, and design skills. Eventually, my career goal is to work for a lobbying group on Capitol Hill or for the staff of a United States Senator. I have the skills and the drive to help The Martin Group in its lobbying efforts.

My résumé is enclosed for your further consideration. The opportunity to serve as a legislative intern with The Martin Group would be an exciting challenge. I will contact you during the week of November 1 to arrange a mutually convenient time to discuss this. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexander T. Smith
Alexander T. Smith
enclosure

Valerie T. Marcado

232 Guilford Place • Norfolk, VA 23508 • (757) 555-6543 • vmar006@odu.edu

May 25, 2005

Mrs. Patty Woollen
Laboratory Coordinator
Illinois Technical College
Marshall Hall 234
Logansburg, IL 23498

Dear Ms. Woollen:

I would like to apply for the position of Laboratory Technician, as posted in the eRecruiting system at Old Dominion University. I recently read an article in *Science Magazine* about the research done on DNA at Illinois Tech. The advancements that scientists, such as Dr. Miller and Dr. Hipman, have made in the field of oncology are tremendous. I am extremely interested in doing research on DNA, especially in the field of oncology, and would like to begin my career in one of the laboratories at Illinois Tech.

My qualifications are based on lab work conducted while a Biochemistry student at Old Dominion University as well as internship experience at the Nauticus Maritime Center in Norfolk. I have studied topics such as genetics, molecular biology, cell biology, and analysis of DNA and proteins. Knowledge of these topics is complemented by the hands-on experience of lab work. My laboratory experiences include *Drosophila*, yeast, and *C. elegans* genetics; sequencing DNA, RFLP analysis, and cloning DNA using the polymerase chain reaction. In addition, my education has provided me with analytical thinking, critical analysis, writing, and interpersonal skills. I believe I have the necessary abilities to work with DNA at Illinois Tech.

My resume is enclosed for your inspection. I would be pleased to discuss this position and my qualifications in greater detail and will contact you within the next ten days. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Valerie T. Marcado

Valerie T. Marcado
enclosure