

# COVER LETTERS & THANK YOU NOTES

The purpose of a cover letter is to directly convey why you are a strong candidate for the position. It is your opportunity to market yourself and demonstrate how your competencies match the job's requirements. It also illustrates your writing ability. You will want to personalize your letter to each position to show why you are a good fit. Always limit your cover letter to one page.

## Cover Letter Content

First impressions count. Before a potential employer reads a word of your cover letter, he or she has an impression of your organizational skills and attention to detail simply by observing its appearance. Your cover letter should include 4-5 short paragraphs. It should sound enthusiastic, polite, confident and professional. Here are some questions that should help you formulate your cover letter paragraphs.

**Paragraph 1** : What is the purpose / intention for writing this letter? Who are you?

State the position you are seeking, the company, why you are writing, and how you learned of the position. Briefly state your qualifications (education, experience, skills, etc.) of which you will go into more detail in the next paragraph. Write in short, concise sentences.

**Paragraph 2** : Why are you a strong candidate? How do your qualifications match up with the qualifications of the position and what skills or knowledge could you contribute?

You should provide specific examples of your demonstrated skills or related experience. Focus on job related skills, class projects, accomplishments, etc. in relation to the job. This section can be in paragraph form or bullet point format.

**Paragraph 3** : Why are you interested in this company? Why do you want to work for them? How can you contribute to the organization's goals?

Show the employer that you've researched the company and know about their products or endeavors. State briefly how you can contribute to their goals.

**Paragraph 4** : What do you hope the next steps will be?

Make sure you include your phone number and email address in this final paragraph. Include a summary statement of your qualifications and interest. Be sure to thank the employer for their time and consideration.

**Proofread** every document you send to an employer. Mistakes on cover letters and resumes are the number one complaint of employers and recruiters and can take you out of the running. Small errors can undermine your credibility and show you don't pay attention to details. Make sure to proofread as carefully as possible.

*Please see following pages for sample cover letters and sample thank you notes.*

### Need more help?

Career Advisors in the Albers Placement Center are available to help you with your cover letter and any other needs you have for your job or internship search. Make an appointment today!

**Albers Placement Center**  
Pigott 331 • 206.296.5687 • [apc@seattleu.edu](mailto:apc@seattleu.edu)  
[www.seattleu.edu/albers/placementcenter](http://www.seattleu.edu/albers/placementcenter)

## Cover Letter Example: Bullet Points

**Anita Job**

Same Header as on Resume

333 Main Street  
Seattle, WA 98111  
206-555-5555  
anitajob@gmail.com

July 31, 2013

Deborah Stanson  
Director, Human Resources Department  
BECU  
1522 East Madison St.  
Seattle, WA 98122

### Avoid "To Whom It May Concern"

If you don't have a name, address letter to a role. Common titles:

- Hiring Manager
- Recruiter
- Human Resources Professional

Dear Ms. Stanson:

Please accept my résumé and application for the Cash Services Representative position with BECU. I learned of the position through Bob Holbrook, an employee in your company. After careful review of the job description I believe my skills and experience are ideally suited to this position.

I possess the following relevant experiences and skills:

Information included in the letter should refer to skills and competencies listed in job description

This can be  
bullet points  
or  
paragraphs

- Excellent customer service and sales skills developed while working for US Bank.
- Three years experience balancing cash registers and reconciling cash receipts at the Seattle University Bookstore.
- One year of experience maintaining accounts, including accounts receivable/payable, daily sales and expense reports for Hometown Grocer.
- Proficiency with computers and several software packages including; MS Word, Excel, Peachtree, and Quicken.

I have always appreciated BECU's focus on personalized, customer-focused financial services. I was also excited to learn that the company is very committed to benefitting the community which closely aligns with my personal values. I believe that my background in customer service and finance would help me be a strong asset to the BECU team.

I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you soon. I will contact you next week to follow up with any questions you might have. I can be reached at 206-555-5555. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anita Job

Enclosure: Resume ←

This illustrates that a resume accompanies your cover letter.  
If you are sending additional documents, list them below.

## Cover Letter Example: Paragraphs

### Seymore Dollars

Seattle, WA  
206.555.8888  
seymoredollars@hotmail.com

May 15, 2013

Hiring Manager  
Expeditors International  
1015 Third Ave., 12th Floor  
Seattle, WA 98104

Describing your qualifications in paragraph format gives the employer a chance to see your writing ability. Make sure to illustrate your qualifications with highlights from your resume such as work experience, academic projects and community involvement

Dear Hiring Manager:

I am writing to express interest in the Operations Internship position posted through Seattle University. I am currently enrolled at Seattle University in the Management program as a senior with an overall GPA of 3.69. I feel that I would be a great candidate for this position because of my work background and skills.

From my current and past work history, I have gained valuable experience collaborating with co-workers and providing customer service on a daily basis through my part-time job as a Starbucks Barista. I am also familiar with operations in the work environment as I worked with quality controls at Genie Industries. Through my academic experience, I have worked effectively in a team setting to complete group projects and present group research. To support myself financially while attending school full time, I work at least 15 hours a week.

In addition to work experience, I am very involved as Vice President of Service for the Alpha Kappa Psi business fraternity. My duties as an officer include planning and organizing community service events for pledges and members. This experience has enhanced my organizational and time management skills.

In my research on Expeditors, I was interested to learn about the unique software the company has developed which has made the company an influential leader in the logistics industry. I know that Expeditors is committed to going beyond the expectations of its customers and providing excellent service. I hope to contribute my skills and experience in customer service and operations to make a strong impact on the organization.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss how my skills may benefit Expeditors. I can be reached at 206-555-8888. I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Seymore Dollars

Enclosure: Resume

"Sincerely" is the most effective and formal closing statement since most likely you don't know the person to whom you're writing. Try to avoid using "Warm Regards" or "Best" until you know the person better.

# Thank You Notes

You will make a great impression if you always send a thank you note after meeting or interviewing with a professional. If your meeting or interview involves multiple people, make sure to send a thank you note to each person. Thank you notes can be sent via email or handwritten on a notecard. Handwritten thank yous are preferred and more memorable. Thank yous should be sent as soon as possible after the meeting or interview. If you are worried that a mailed handwritten note will take awhile, send an email right away and mail a handwritten note.

- Politely thank the interviewer for the opportunity to meet with them
- Mention 1-2 aspects of the conversation that stood out to you
- Reiterate why you feel you would be a great fit for the position
- Thank them again for their time and mention you look forward to hearing from them

## Handwritten Note Example

*Dear Mr. Smith,*

*June 1, 2013*

*Thank you for the opportunity to interview with you for the Finance Internship position earlier today. I really enjoyed learning more about the company's goals to gain new market share and also how much the company has grown over the past two years. I feel that with my strong analytical skills and my academic background in finance, I would be able to greatly contribute to your organization. I am excited about the possibility to add value to the financial services team.*

*If you need any more information from me, please let me know. Thank you again for your time and I look forward to hearing from you soon.*

*Sincerely, Anita Job*

## Email Example

To: manderson@marketingcompany.com

Subject: Thank You

Ms. Anderson:

Thank you so much for interviewing me today for the Marketing Coordinator position. Learning more from you about the company's exciting innovations in marketing strategy increased my interest in the position and the opportunity to contribute to the organization.

As I mentioned in our discussion, I feel that the marketing consulting project I completed in my capstone course as well as my experience as a Social Media Intern have well prepared me for this role. I also feel that my strengths in creativity and project management would benefit the marketing team and the company.

Thank you again for your time and please let me know if you need anything else from me. I look forward to hearing from you by the end of next week as we discussed.

Sincerely, Seymore Dollars