

UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER CAREER CENTER

“GETTING STARTED” COVER LETTER GUIDE AND SAMPLES

****We highly encourage you to come in to the office to review your documents with a counselor!** A counselor can help you stand out and differentiate yourself by tailoring your documents to specific fields and positions! To make an appointment, stop by the Career Center (302 Meliora Hall) or call (585) 275-2366.

COVER LETTERS

The U of R Career Center believes that our students' resumes should always be accompanied by a cover letter. Cover letters do a number of things:

- They serve as business letters that convey the essence of resumes to prospective employers by focusing on career goals and key aspects of resume qualifications.
- They introduce people and their backgrounds to prospective employers in order to attempt to show a connection between the person's credentials and the qualifications for the opening.
- They serve as personal marketing letters that are intended to sell the person to the potential employer and convince the employer that the person has valuable skills to offer.

Step One: Research the position or field

The first step to writing a cover letter is understanding the basic format as well as the job/field. There are some samples below that you can follow.

Step Two: Writing the cover letter

Organization of a Cover Letter

Paragraph One: This paragraph seeks to establish a focus and gain the interest of the reader.

Essentially, the paragraph should explain why the individual is writing, their focus (what they are seeking), and any relationship they have had with the potential employer (referral or contact).

Specifically the following is contained in the first paragraph:

- If you were referred to the employer by someone at the company, a career counselor, a former employer, or someone else, mention that person's name and point out that this person suggested to write.
- Why the person is writing and what they are seeking
- Why the person is interested in the position
- In the instance of a letter of application, mention the specific title of the position being applied for. Also, mention how the person heard about the open position.

Paragraph Two: Displays the qualifications of the individual and how they relate to the position or company.

- The attention-getting section of the cover letter.
- The reason that the employer should hire the individual.
- Highlight specific skills, coursework, work experiences that best match what the employer is looking for, especially if these are not listed on the resume.
- Include a statement indicating that the individual and the employer would be a good fit.

Paragraph Three: Pulls the letter together and suggests follow-up.

- Closes with an intention to contact the employer at a specific time for an appointment or to discuss qualifications.

- Tells the employer that the individual is available by specific means and how he/she may reach the individual.
- Says that the individual will look forward to hearing from the employer.

Cover letter reminders

- Follow-up is essential when sending out resumes and cover letters. After faxing a resume, you should follow-up the letter with a phone call or email. Be persistent and polite, but not obnoxious. Call and confirm if materials have been received; then you can ask what the next step is.
- Do not exceed one page.
- Phone ahead to find out who to send the cover letter and resume to, then fax both to the indicated person. List the name and title of the person in the return address portion of the letter. Follow with a hard copy by mail
- Mr. ____: or Dr. ____: or Ms. ____: are appropriate for the salutation.
- Sound positive and confident emphasizing your strengths.
- Make the introduction interesting; try to get the reader's attention.
- Be specific about the position being applied for and why.
- Focus on individual qualifications that the employer would be interested in.
- Tailor each letter to meet the individual employer and requirements of the position.
- Let the employer know when they should expect to be contacted within the next few weeks.
- Use the same 8 1/2 " x 11" paper for the resume and the cover letter.
- Take time making sure the cover letter is written correctly and creatively.

Step Three: Have the cover letter critiqued

Make sure all components are included and communicated clearly. Check and double-check spelling and grammar.

JILL FIRSTYEAR

University of Rochester CPU Box 123456 ■ Rochester, NY 14627 ■ (555) 555-5555
213 Meliora Avenue ■ Anytown, NJ 01010 ■ (555) 555-5555
jfirstyear@mail.rochester.edu

February 19, 2007

Ms. Liz Smith
Managing Editor
Anytown Post- Gazette
20 Franklin Street
Anytown, NJ 01010

Ms. Smith:

My summer goal is to return home and gain experience in the field of journalism. At present, I plan on majoring in English with a journalism/media concentration. I am hoping to speak with you regarding internships or summer positions.

To date, I have taken courses in English, Anthropology and Political Science that have honed my writing skills. As a volunteer for the writing tutors program in my high school, I developed proofreading and editing skills. I am comfortable conducting and summarizing research. Most recently, I have completed a large study on a Brazilian community for an anthropology course. This project has given me experience in writing, editing, and proofreading as well as time management and meeting deadlines. Additionally, as part of my International Relations course, I read the New York Times daily and feel confident in my grasp of current events. My 3.4 GPA demonstrates my dedication, willingness to work hard and my strengths in the subject areas I am studying.

My family has been a long-time subscriber to the Anytown Post-Gazette. I admire your comprehensive community coverage and would be excited to work with you this summer.

Please contact me if I can provide you with additional information. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jill Firstyear
Jill Firstyear

This cover letter illustrates a “**letter of inquiry**,” for general opportunities within a particular functional area, or of a “**letter of application**,” when specifically applying for a posted job. The candidate is making first contact with a person on her “hit list”. Initially, contacts are identified via printed directories or websites, then confirmed through telephone conversations. Cover letter writing doesn’t have to be difficult to be effective, but make sure the qualifications highlighted match the position you are seeking.

U.R. QUALIFIED

University of Rochester CPU Box 234571 • Rochester, NY 14627 • (555) 555-5555 • Ur005g@mail.rochester.edu
213 Wyoming Avenue • South Orange, NJ 07074 • (555) 555-5555

December 1, 2006

Donald N. Acton
Human Resources Director
Bio-Living
123 Scientific Way
Greenbelt, MD 21002
FAX: 555-555-5555

Mr. Acton:

My summer objective is to expand upon competencies that I have acquired as a Biomedical Engineering major at the University of Rochester. I would like to apply the research, laboratory, organizational, and technical skills gained through coursework in an industry environment, specifically with Bi-Living. Thus, I would like to interview for an internship related to Biomedical Engineering or Chemical Engineering.

Relevant courses in Biomechanics, Fluid Dynamics, Circuits, Introductory MATLAB, and Electricity and Magnetism have enabled me to develop solid technical, laboratory, and problem solving skills. In addition, course and laboratory work in Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry and Mechanics have provided me with a concrete grasp of the basic sciences as well as practical experience implementing various laboratory procedures. Computer modeling skills have been developed through a MATLAB project simulating orthopedic motion. Augmenting my technical skills are outstanding communication skills demonstrated through the presentation of two separate projects.

As my resume indicates, I possess the engineering knowledge and technical abilities and perspectives necessary to be successful as an intern. I will call to confirm the receipt of my resume (originals to follow by mail), and, at your convenience, to arrange a brief meeting. More importantly, I will be in Washington DC area for winter break from December 22nd until January 11th. Perhaps we could meet to discuss internship options then?

Sincerely,

UR Qualified

UR Qualified

This cover letter illustrates a “**letter of inquiry**,” for general opportunities within a particular functional area, or of a “**letter of application**,” when specifically applying for a posted job. The candidate is making first contact with a person on her “hit list.” It also shows **fax formatting**. Initially, contacts are identified via printed directories or websites, then confirmed through telephone conversations. Cover letter writing doesn’t have to be difficult to be effective, but make sure the qualifications highlighted match the position you are seeking

EMAIL VERSION – USE WHEN A COVER LETTER IS NOT REQUIRED BUT WILL HELP INTRODUCE YOU AND YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

From: ure008g@mail.rochester.edu
To: jdoe@bigbank.com
Subject: Summer Position at Big Bank, Inc.
Date: Fri, 25 Mar 2007 11:06:36 -0400

Mr. Doe:

My current studies as an Economics major at the University of Rochester have led me to seek a summer experience at Big Bank. My post-graduation objective is to begin a career in the field of finance. Therefore, I am writing to express my interest in an internship or summer position with your firm.

Courses in Financial Markets, Money Credit and Banking, Econometrics, and Accounting, as well a background in Macro and Microeconomics have allowed me to develop the essential background knowledge necessary to contribute to your organization. Through projects in Management Studies courses, taught by faculty of the Simon Graduate School of Business, I have developed the quantitative and analytical skills necessary to research investments, identify trends, and document findings in written and verbal formats.

In addition to my coursework and projects, I serve as Treasurer and Business Manager of the African American Students Association. Through this position, I have learned to create and manage budgets, plan and organize events, anticipate organizational needs, and collaborate with fellow students. This co-curricular leadership experience has also taught me valuable time management and interpersonal communication skills.

Big Bank's recent achievements during the current economic downturn are an impressive example of time-tested investing methods and strategies. I would truly appreciate the opportunity to serve within appropriate capacities this summer. I will call to confirm the receipt of this email, including my attached resume, and to clarify next steps. Of course, I would welcome initial telephone communications, as well as any formal interviews that might be appropriate. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

U.R. Redinow

University of Rochester
CPU 873471
Rochester, NY 14627
(585) 274-1111
ure008g@mail.rochester.edu

This cover letter illustrates a “**letter of inquiry**,” for general opportunities within a particular functional area, or of a “**letter of application**,” when specifically applying for a posted job. The candidate is making first contact with a person on her “hit list.” It also shows **email formatting, adding an appropriate signature**. Initially, contacts are identified via printed directories or websites, then confirmed through telephone conversations. Cover letter writing doesn't have to be difficult to be effective, but make sure the qualifications highlighted match the position you are seeking.

I. WANDA INTERVIEW

741 West Avenue • Rochester, NY 14610 • (585) 255-7249 • iw003@mail.rochester.edu
459 Locke Drive • Pittsford, NY 94534 • (585) 555-9877

April 23, 2007

Jamie Stenson
Account Supervisor
Saatchi and Saatchi
8765 Broadway
New York, NY 14623-0450
FAX (212) 333-2004

Mr. Stenson:

I would like to interview for intern or entry-level account management positions at Saatchi and Saatchi. Relevant courses in Marketing and Finance, and Accounting, as well as many independent marketing projects have enabled me to develop practical skills and perspectives. Knowledge of strategic planning, marketing research, budgeting, advertising techniques and related research, report writing and presentation skills have been fine tuned in varied settings.

In general, I offer:

- Marketing research, strategic planning, promotions, customer service and sales talents nurtured in advertising, promotions and retail internships and employment.
- Specialized knowledge gained via courses including: Principles of Marketing, Marketing Projects and Cases, Psychology of Human Motivation and Emotion, Business Administration, Public Relations Writing, Advertising, Mass Media, Persuasion and Consumer Behavior.
- Knowledge of International Business approaches and cultural sensitivities gained living and working in varied North American, European and Middle Eastern settings.
- German, French, Dutch, and Farsi fluency and conversational Spanish capabilities.
- Windows and MacOS, UNIX, HTML, Word, Word Perfect, Excel, PageMaker, Adobe PhotoShop, Netscape, Explorer, and Internet communications utilities.

Specific qualifications which match those cited on your website as required for account management posts, I offer:

- Skills gained from positions in advertising, promotions and retail internships and employment.
- Blend of quantitative, analytical, and creative problem solving talents.
- Capacities to conduct and analyze research, translating data into persuasive proposals, reports, and graphics.
- Intense curiosity regarding consumer behavior, varied products and industries, and the nature of market segmentation.

I will be graduating from University of Rochester in May with French and Psychological Applications in Business dual majors, a minor in Economics, as well as a Certificate in Management Studies in Marketing. As my resume indicates, I have had a number of internships with local as well as international firms. I would welcome the chance to discuss my qualifications for entry-level or internship opportunities. I will call to confirm receipt of this fax (originals to follow by mail) and, at your convenience, to arrange a brief meeting.

Sincerely,

I. Wanda Interview

This cover letter illustrates a "letter of inquiry," written by our model candidate. It is used to seek general consideration within a particular functional areas. A "letter of application," is used when specifically applying for a posted job. This candidate is making first contact with a person on her "hit list." Initially, contacts are identified via printed directories or websites, then confirmed through telephone conversations. Faxing or emailing are quick ways to make initial contact (with originals sent later by mail). This document uses the Qualification Summary as an easy and effective way to present overall qualifications. Cover letter writing doesn't have to be difficult to be effective, but make sure the qualifications highlighted match the position you are seeking.

I. WANDA INTERVIEW

741 West Avenue • Rochester, NY 14610 • (585) 255-7249 • wi003j@mail.rochester.edu
459 Locke Drive • Pittsford, NY 94534 • (585) 555-9877

March 13, 2007

Steven Wilson
Global Vision Care Group
Bausch & Lomb
123 N. Goodman Street
PO Box 421
Rochester, NY 14623-0450
FAX (585) 111-9876

Mr. Wilson:

I will be graduating from the University of Rochester with French and Psychological Applications in Business majors, a minor in Economics, as well as a Certificate in Management Studies in Marketing and Finance/Accounting. My post-graduation objective is to begin a career in marketing, and I would like to explore options with Bausch & Lomb.

Detailed on the attached resume, I offer general marketing, and specific business development, and product management qualifications gained within domestic and internationally focused operations. Relevant courses in Marketing and Finance/Accounting, as well as many independent marketing projects have enabled me to develop practical skills and perspectives. Knowledge of strategic planning, marketing research, budgeting, advertising techniques and related research, report writing and presentation skills have been fine tuned in varied settings. As my resume indicates, I have had a number of internships with local as well as international firms in the past five years. I do hope that you will share with me your thoughts regarding where these capabilities would best "fit" within Bausch & Lomb.

I would welcome the chance to meet with you to discuss entry-level titles and functions, to identify appropriate contact persons and, generally, to gain insights regarding how to effectively break into the field of marketing. I will call to confirm receipt of this fax and, at your convenience, to arrange a brief meeting. Please feel free to communicate with me via the phone or e-mail address posted above.

Sincerely,

I. Wanda Interview

I. Wanda Interview

*This **general cover letter** includes a request for information pertaining "entry-level titles and functions" as well as the "names of appropriate contact persons". Again, while this one focuses on marketing related positions, the format and content can be adapted for any goal. It also shows acceptable **fax formatting**.*

I. Wanda Interview

University of Rochester CPU 274811 • Rochester, NY 14627 • (585) 555-5555 • ur001j@mail.rochester.edu
125 Old Mill Road • Dover, NJ 07801 • (973) 555-7808

September 15, 2006

Steve Smith
Buck Consulting
125 Main Street
New York, NY 10001

Steve:

I wanted to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for my internship at Buck last summer. The skills and abilities that I developed enhanced my capacities to contribute to the firm, and they also now give my courses new meaning. Inspired by last summer's positive experience, I began to investigate other areas of Buck Consulting. This summer, my hope is to obtain an internship in the firm's investment consulting practice.

All past internship experiences, including those at Buck, have enhanced my ability to identify, analyze and track data and pertinent documentation. As a result, I possess an understanding of the how to interpret data then present findings to a variety of constituency groups. Augmenting research and analytic skills is my inquisitive nature. By asking questions, within academic and employment contexts, I understand the processes and reasoning behind my assignments. Supporting my desire to work within investment consulting internship capacities, in addition to actuarial experience, I have a sound background in financial services and sales, including the ability to communicate financial information to current and potential clients.

Capacities to excel in challenging environments are demonstrated by achievements noted on the enclosed resume and by strong GPAs in both of my majors, Economics and Statistics. Business knowledge as well as case study experiences were enhanced through completion of a Management Studies Certificate. This academic undertaking required completion of courses, projects and related assignments taught by College and Simon School of Business faculty.

Attached is a copy of my resume, detailing all qualifications I now offer. Any advice or assistance you can offer, would be greatly appreciated. Again, my hope is to obtain an investment consulting internship with Buck, but any opportunities to return to the firm this summer would be amazing. I will call you at your convenience so that we can set up a time to discuss next steps. Of course, feel free to forward a copy of this letter to any appropriate individuals. Thanks again for all your support last summer and your assistance with my candidacy for another internship.

Sincerely,

I. Wanda Interview

I. Wanda Interview

This sample **cover letter** includes expressions of appreciation for a previous internship, as well as an inquiry for another. Be sure to follow-up your summer experiences with thank you notes. Also, **by removing the first paragraph, this would serve as an excellent letter of inquiry.**

Science Research Student

CPU 275368 • Rochester, NY 14627 • science@gmail.com
555 State Ave. • Bronx, NY 11355 • (917) 555-5555

March 8, 2007

Jack & Pearl Resnick Campus
1300 Morris Park Ave
Bronx, NY 10461

Dear Hiring Manager:

After reviewing your website, I became very interested in the various positions available at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. I would like to interview for the research technician positions within the biochemistry and immunology departments, and I am confident that my education and research background will be appropriate for these opportunities.

Enclosed is a copy of my resume, which more fully details my qualifications for the position. I will be graduating from the University of Rochester this May with a B.S in Biochemistry. I have a strong academic background in biochemistry and molecular biology and am currently working on an independent research project under Dr. John Smith at the Infectious Diseases Unit of the University of Rochester Medical Center. I believe my coursework and experience working in the lab this past year has helped me gain the necessary laboratory and analytical skills needed for a research position. I have also continued to expand my academic background by taking several graduate-level science and medical research courses at the University of Rochester.

I would appreciate the chance to meet with you to learn more about this position and to answer any questions you may have for me. I will be contacting you to confirm receipt of my resume, and at your convenience to arrange a brief meeting. Please feel free to contact me via phone or e-mail listed above.

Sincerely,

Science Research Student

JOE STUDENT

University of Rochester CPU 9999999 · Rochester, NY 14627 · Js004k@mail.rochester.edu
10 Smith Drive · Rochester, NY 14627 · (585) 555-5555

July 22, 2007

Address
Address
Address

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am a senior at the University of Rochester majoring in Economics and Political Science. Upon my graduation in May, I plan to pursue a career in the field of investment banking. Please consider this letter along with my included resume, as an application for your analyst position.

As my resume indicates, I have had the opportunity to gain research, analytical, leadership and writing skills through my coursework and various other experiences. I have held several internship positions that have widened my interest in the financial industry, as well as giving me more of the basic tools to be successful in a career in investment banking. Although I have been interested in financial markets and have done a small amount of my own for several years, my first hands-on experience in the industry came as an intern for Wachovia. My main responsibilities included researching, organizing and concisely presenting account and estate information for clients. I also assisted in organizing monthly seminars and client meetings. This position gave me the basic background to gain an internship position at UBS Financial Services. There, I served on a team led by a Senior Vice President and a Financial Advisor. My primary responsibility was to help create detailed financial plans for current and prospective clients using "Financial Goal Analysis" and "The Advisor" software. I also attended regular office meetings, compiled daily-revenue summaries and completed a highly detailed 28 month trade-commission analysis for my team.

In addition to the aforementioned internship positions, I have been a teaching assistant in Statistics for the past two years, a position offered to me based on my performance in the course. My responsibilities have increased over time based on my abilities and now include: leading recitations, grading homework assignments, tutoring students in need of extra assistance and conducting exam review sessions. In addition to improving my background in statistics, an increasingly essential aspect of the financial industry, this position helped improve my ability to communicate information to my peers in a practical and concise manner.

My wide range of experiences during the past several years gives me a strong foundation to begin a career in the financial industry. The opportunity to work XYZ company would be an ideal way to start my professional career. Please contact me if I can provide you with any additional materials. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joe Student