
COVER LETTERS



Durham College
Career Development
hired.durhamcollege.ca



PURPOSE OF THE COVER LETTER

The cover letter aims to affirm your interest in a particular position and get you an interview. This letter is an important introduction to who you are, why you are writing, and, further, to highlight what you have to offer a prospective employer that matches the qualifications the employer is seeking for the particular position.

DO I REALLY NEED A COVER LETTER?

Composing customized cover letters during a job search can be challenging and time-consuming; sometimes, applicants hesitate to include a cover letter when an employer does not explicitly require it.

If you are wondering if you should include a cover letter, the short answer is **YES**. You should almost always submit a cover letter unless the job posting explicitly mentions not to submit one.

Your cover letter:

- Introduces you as a candidate and complements your resumé for a specific position within a company.
- Offers an opportunity to sell yourself to the employer in a narrative format and explains why you are an ideal candidate for the position.
- Demonstrates your written communication and analytical skills.
- Invites face-to-face discussion with the employer.

DEVELOPING A COVER LETTER

Before Drafting Your Cover Letter:

- Research the company/organization.
- Try finding the name and title of the hiring person. If this information is not available, then using Attention Hiring Manager or Human Resources is appropriate.
- Review the job posting and clearly understand the requirements for the position.

Four Things Your Cover Letter Must Do:

- Express your interest in the position/company.
- Highlight your skills and experience relevant to the needs of the employer.
- Demonstrate your skills, accomplishments and experience with concrete examples related to the position.
- Provide your contact information so the employer can contact you for an interview.

COMPOSING YOUR COVER LETTER

Composing a Cover Letter Involves Three Steps:

1. Clearly establish your intention for writing (opening). Explain to the Hiring Manager why you are writing. Are you replying in response to an ad? Were you referred to the employer by someone? Did you read some news about the company/organization that suggested they might be hiring?
2. Define your message (main body). Refer to your qualifications - skills, experience and education. Describe how your qualifications match the job opportunity. What can you offer in relation to the employer's needs? Refer to your resumé, but avoid repeating what's on your resumé. Elaborate and expand as needed.
3. Properly close your letter (closing) and provide your contact information for them to connect with you for an interview.



KEY ELEMENTS OF A COVER LETTER

KELLY STEVENS

Oshawa, ON 905-555-1234 kstevens@gmail.com LinkedIn URL (optional)

Header
Your contact information

August 29, 2023

Contact at Company
Contact's job title
Company name
Address
City, province postal code

Date
Name/ Title of contact person
Employer name, Address

Dear Janet McMichael,

Salutation – Full Name or Dear Hiring Manager or Attention Hiring Manager

Re: Marketing Assistant – Job ID 4321

Job title and (company's competition number) in brackets if applicable

OPENING PARAGRAPH

State job title you're interested in, where you heard about it, and why are you interested in the job/ Company/ Organization.

- Research the company and job posting and explain your relevant experience/skills or education that makes you a good fit for the position.

Opening paragraph
(Why writing the cover letter)

MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS (2ND AND 3RD)

- Customize your letter for each job you apply.
- Review the job posting and identify the education, skills and experience required for the job.
- Draw on experiences from work, school, volunteer opportunities, field placement, etc.
- How and where have you demonstrated related skills and experiences?

Middle paragraph
(Highlight skills and experience related to the position)

CLOSING PARAGRAPH

Thank the employer for their consideration and indicate the best way to contact you to schedule an interview.

Closing paragraph
(Mention best method to contact you for an interview)

Sincerely,

Kelly Stevens

Signature

COVER LETTER OPENING STRATEGIES

To stand apart from the competition you may want to use a strategy that is unique to you and not one that is overused by other applicants.

Generic example: Please accept this letter and resumé as my application for the position of _____ with _____.

Develop your own pitch for opening a cover letter that is unique to you and holds the reader's attention. Here are a few good strategies for writing a marketable cover letter to attract the hiring manager's attention.

Start with What You Bring to the Position/Company/Organization

An employer always wants to know what you bring to the position and that you are the best fit for the role. In the opening paragraph, you can briefly highlight (one line) your skills or experience related to the position and let the employer know how you can contribute to the company.

Research the Company/Organization

Research the company and review what resonates with you about the company or position, and include it in your cover letter introduction. Describe in such a way so that the reader can see that you are interested in the company and are enthusiastic about being a part of the company/organization.

Highlight your Accomplishments Related to the Position

If you have experience and have accomplished great results in your field, you can start your cover letter with a notable and quantifiable accomplishment. Ensure that it reflects the experience that is related to the position. By displaying your relevant accomplishments, you can grab the attention of the reader and show that you are capable of performing the role.

IMPACTFUL INTRODUCTORY SENTENCE SAMPLES

- My proven track record of successfully performing _____ makes me an ideal candidate for the _____ opportunity that you have advertised.
- During your visit to Durham College last fall, I had the pleasure of learning about your organization and the varied experiences offered to new graduates.
- My recently completed education in _____ and my experience with _____ make me a strong candidate for the position of _____ with _____.
- As a Durham College graduate from _____, I have been hoping to find the kind of position you have recently posted on _____.
- I came to know from _____ that you will soon have a vacancy for a _____.

- As a recent graduate of Durham College's _____program, I offer solid academic credentials as well as industry experience gained from a field placement at _____.
- I recently met with _____ from your organization, and he/she strongly recommended that I send you my resumé.

SECOND SENTENCE OF THE OPENING PARAGRAPH SAMPLES

- I would welcome the opportunity to contribute my education, skills and experience to your _____ team. (mention the type of team: administrative, accounting, marketing)
- From my research on your site, I found that we both believe that _____(incorporate your knowledge of the company or what you discovered from researching the company/organization and how it aligns with your similar vision, values or goals)
- Given the opportunity, I know that my strong _____ foundation would benefit your department, customers and the bottom line.
- I am very interested in this position because _____, and I think that my education and experience would be an asset to your company.

MIDDLE PARAGRAPH SAMPLES

- In April, I will graduate from Durham College with a diploma in _____. My courses have provided me with a valuable educational background as well as thorough training in ____ and _____.
- In addition to operating a _____, I can use a _____. I have also had training in/on _____ and _____.
- As a recent graduate in _____, I am qualified in the areas of _____.
- My experience and skills have prepared me well for this position. My strengths that are most relevant to this position include _____.
- I have gained extensive experience through my education and field placements. Specifically, _____.
- I am a dedicated employee with (experience/knowledge) as a _____.
- I have always set high standards (or) strived for the top and consistently achieved my goals. For example _____.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH SAMPLES

- I would like to have the opportunity to speak with you about this position. I am available during the day at (telephone number) or anytime by email at (professional email address).
- Thank you for reviewing my application. I can be reached at _____.

- I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my skills, experience and education and how I can contribute to this role. I can be reached at _____ (telephone number) or (professional email address).

COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

- Write a new customized cover letter each time you apply for a position
- Match your cover letter heading to your resumé heading
- Make it easy to read – no smaller than 11 or more than 12 points, 1-inch margin
- Keep it to a single page
- Proofread it. Check for spelling and grammatical errors
- Address your letter to the ‘Hiring Manager’ or ‘Human Resources Manager’ if there is no individual contact name
- Check your spelling, grammar, punctuation, structure, and style
- Identify, in the opening sentence, the position that you are seeking
- Show how your experiences relate to the job requirements
- Include keywords found in the job description/posting, e.g. safety, communication, sales, customer service
- Avoid abbreviations or contractions (isn’t)
- Use a variety of sentence structures, and avoid using “I” excessively
- Mention your contact information in your closing paragraph



SAMPLE COVER LETTER – RESPONSE TO POSTING

KELLY STEVENS

Oshawa, ON

905-555-1234

kstevens@gmail.com

LinkedIn URL (optional)

August 29, 2023

Janet McMichael
Director, Business Development
ABC Assurance
1234 Main Street
Oshawa, ON, L0L 1L0

Dear Janet McMichael,

Re: Marketing Assistant – Job ID 4321

While researching ABC Assurance, I found that the company is opening up a new marketing division and recruiting for a Marketing Assistant. I welcome the opportunity to contribute my education and experience to the marketing team and organizational goals. This exciting new initiative that your company is launching will be an opportunity for me to demonstrate and apply my business marketing skills to enhance your company's brand.

Recently, I completed the Marketing - Business Diploma through Durham College, where I gained a strong interest in business development. Through my involvement in a group project, I acquired practical experience that highlighted the realities, rewards and challenges within the Marketing field. I have developed effective communication skills through the variety of presentations that I have delivered. I can be counted upon to work effectively both independently and within the team environment to contribute to the department's overall goals. In addition, I have developed proficiency in the current social media marketing techniques that you require to launch a successful marketing campaign.

While working in the hospitality sector, I enhanced my customer service skills by consistently providing exceptional service and was recognized with a Service Excellence Award. My effective interpersonal and sales skills developed by maintaining a loyal customer base allowed me to exceed sales targets regularly. Additionally, I have proven organizational skills gained through scheduling 14 rotational staff in 24-hour shifts.

I can make a positive impact as a Marketing Assistant within ABC Assurance. I would enjoy meeting with you to discuss how my skills, education and experience can be applied to this role. I can be reached at 905-555-1234 or kstevens@gmail.com to arrange an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelly Stevens

SAMPLE COVER LETTER – NO JOB POSTING

Josh Banter

Oshawa, ON | 905.555.3453 | j.banter@gmail.com

August 29, 2023

Jennifer Smith
Production Manager
XYZ Injection Moulds Ltd.
389 Princess Avenue
Kingston, ON, L0L 0L0

Dear Jennifer Smith:

I am a recent graduate of Durham College with a Mechanical Engineering Technology Advanced Diploma. While researching potential career opportunities, I discovered that XYZ is one of the most competitive in the plastics industry in Canada, placing great value on its people and the company vision. I am seeking an entry-level Mechanical Engineering Technologist opportunity within your Engineering department and submit my resumé for your consideration.

My training and knowledge in providing technical support and service using the most current technology and standards would make me a strong asset to XYZ Injection Moulds Ltd. Specifically, my analytical skills allow me to solve engineering challenges involving fluid-thermal sciences. In addition, I can create, modify and improve engineering designs using conventional and computer-based methods as needed. By performing engineering tests and failure analysis, my work will support tasks and projects your engineers are developing and working on.

Through my field placement in research and development, I gained experience working in a professional office environment. This opportunity greatly enhanced my attention to detail, time management, interpersonal and communication skills by working on different time-sensitive and detailed projects.

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications further, and I will follow up within two weeks' time to explore potential opportunities. You can reach me at (905) 555-3453 or by email at j.banter@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Josh Banter

For assistance in preparing a cover letter, book an appointment with a Career Development Coach:

Book an appointment online at **Hired** (<http://hired.durhamcollege.ca>)

In-person / virtual appointments available

Oshawa campus: Student Services building, SSB 212

Whitby campus: Room 103B (Beside Enrolment Services)



DURHAM COLLEGE
SUCCESS MATTERS

Hired Portal

hired.durhamcollege.ca

- Search full-time, part-time, contract, summer, & volunteer job postings
- Book one-to-one coaching appointments
- View upcoming recruiting events
- Explore valuable Career Resources for your program
- Employer Information Sessions

Follow #GetHiredDC on:



GETHIREDDC