

## **COVER LETTERS**

Unless you hand-deliver your résumé to the *person* who will actually be doing the hiring, you **MUST** include a cover letter. The letter should be typed and laser-printed on the same type and color paper as your résumé, in business letter format. A cover letter should be 3 or 4 paragraphs only. Do not just reiterate your résumé. Instead, focus on several key areas and go into detail, including what you did, what you learned, and what you accomplished. Be sure to tailor your cover letter to the specific company and/or job that you are applying for. Research the company or include sentences that correspond to job duties or qualifications from the posted job description.

Never address your letter “To Whom it May Concern” unless you do not care if you don’t get the job. If the employer is local, phone and request the name of the person who is responsible for hiring entry-level professionals in your area. Be certain to get the name and title (and correct spelling). Include the title of the person to whom you are writing in your inside address and envelope address.

Whenever possible, avoid sending your letter to the personnel department as they generally do not have hiring power – only the power to screen you out. Check the Internet or book directories to find names of people to contact.

Your opening statement should state the purpose of your letter (your objective). Mention a name if you have permission (e.g., John Smith recommended I contact you...). You should also mention how you heard about the job and why it interests you.

In your next paragraph, stress any particular strengths you have which qualify you for the job. It can be effective to expand on one or two experiences listed in your résumé, but do not repeat information word for word.

In your closing paragraph (number three or four) indicate your desire for a personal interview, repeat your phone number, and offer any assistance to help in a speedy response. It is also a good idea to follow up each résumé and cover letter with a phone call. If you plan to do this, you can state in the final paragraph when you will be calling the company.

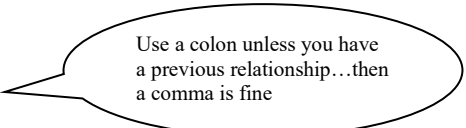
*Remember: The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce yourself and to personalize your résumé by demonstrating your passion and revealing your personality!*

*Your Name*  
*Your Address, etc. info*  
*(use same format as you did on your résumé)*

Date

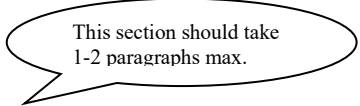
Potential Employer's Name  
Company Name  
Company Address

Dear Mr. (Employer):



Use a colon unless you have  
a previous relationship...then  
a comma is fine

State the reason for the letter  
Position or type of work for which you are applying  
Indicate where you learned of the opening (friend, newspaper, Career Services, etc.)  
Why you are interested in this particular position and company (what you know about the company)



This section should take  
1-2 paragraphs max.

State what you can do for the employer  
If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate  
If you have practical work experience, point out the specific achievements or qualifications  
Try not to repeat the information on the résumé; rather, detail a couple of main points (what you did, what you learned, what you accomplished)  
Look at the job description for the keywords/skills they're seeking and highlight those here

Refer to the enclosed résumé, which summarizes your qualifications, training, and experiences  
(NOTE: cover letter should be 3 OR 4 paragraphs long...no longer!)

State the action you would like to see happen (i.e.: an interview)  
Indicate your desire for a personal interview and your flexibility as to the time and place  
Include your phone number again  
Offer assistance to help them respond quickly (e.g.: state that you will be in the area on a certain date and would like to set up an interview if you will)  
Thank them for their consideration/time and state that you look forward to hearing from them

Sincerely,

*(don't forget to sign...on electronic copies, use a jpg of your signature!)*

Your name

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## EXAMPLE: Entry-Level BS Chemist

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December 14, 20xx

Dr. Jo'sephine Barlow  
Corporate Recruitment  
Research Laboratories  
Eli Lilly and Company  
Indianapolis IN 46285

Dear Dr. Barlow:

I am writing in response to the Eli Lilly report in the *ABC Chronicle*. In May 20xx, I will be graduating from the University of Illinois with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry. I plan to pursue a career as a Synthetic Research Chemist after graduation. Eli Lilly's commitment to developing pharmaceuticals that help people live longer, healthier, and more active lives is a great fit with my career values.

Through participating in undergraduate research for the past 18 months, I have developed and improved valuable laboratory skills. The goals of my research project include optimizing reaction conditions and purification methods for each of the 4 steps in synthesizing an unreported ligand. Last January, I presented this work at the Regional Academy of Sciences in Chicago. My final results will be summarized in my honors thesis.

In addition to valuable laboratory skills, from this experience, I have learned attention to detail skills, and the importance of collaboration to synergize knowledge and skills in order to achieve a greater outcome. I hope to integrate all of these experiences into my career.

I look forward to the opportunity to interview for a position with Eli Lilly and will call you next week to confirm receipt of my résumé. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Huang Wang*

Huang Wang

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## EXAMPLE: BS Chemical Engineer with experience

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### Jennifer Rodriguez

62 Mulberry Drive Cambridge, MA 02139

jrodriguez@email.com

649-869-75xx

September 18, 20xx

Mr. Douglas King  
Director of Human Resources  
Colgate-Palmolive Company  
600 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10022

Dear Mr. King:

I am writing to apply for a full-time Chemical Engineering position at Colgate-Palmolive. As a senior in Chemical Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign graduating in May 20xx, I am very interested in the development of consumer products and have read a great deal about your excellent company and outstanding products. I love the creativity and ingenuity of Softsoap and have been an avid user of this product since it first joined your line of products. I welcome the opportunity to bring my research and engineering skills to Colgate-Palmolive's products.

As you can see from my attached resume, I developed my research and engineering skills through several internships and academic projects. During my internship at Procter & Gamble, I developed all aspects of a prototype for a newly conceptualized oral care product. By the end of my project, I was able to hand out samples of the product. My supervisors commended me for my communication and creative problem solving skills and for my ability to work well with many different people within our development team.

I developed my leadership and interpersonal skills by being an active member of several organizations on the University of Illinois campus. As president of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, I am in charge of planning meetings, fundraisers, activities, and our annual departmental banquet. While Service Chair for Kappa Kappa Iota, an honor society, I organized events and activities and motivated members to participate.

I look forward to learning more about career opportunities at Colgate-Palmolive. If you have any questions, please contact me at 649-869-75xx or jrodriguez@email.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer Rodriguez*

Jennifer Rodriguez

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## EXAMPLE: PhD Chemical Engineer

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Ebony Rodgers  
1805 Eisenhower Drive  
Urbana, IL 61801

July 15, 20xx

Dr. Candace Rocker  
ExxonMobil  
22777 Springwoods Village Pkwy  
Spring, TX 77389

Dear Dr. Rocker:

During my graduate studies in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at the University of Illinois, I learned about opportunities in research and development with ExxonMobil through a seminar conducted by Antonio Pappas. Following the seminar, I reached out to a number of alumni from Illinois who now work at ExxonMobil and those conversations inspired me to apply for a chance to interview with you while you are on campus.

I have had an opportunity to work on a number of diverse projects throughout my research career to create ideas and propose development programs for innovation in the fields of polymer science and engineering. Most recently, I have been working independently on catalyst design and synthesis as well as DFT polymerization. Throughout my research career, I have been published six times and collaborated with my lab on a provisional patent.

Staying abreast of relevant competitive IP literature in order to find innovative directions in our research has been a new area of development for me, but I have quickly become the 'go to' person in our lab to search out relevant articles and even collaborators. As a result, I have been able to develop strong contacts within academia, at government labs, and even within industry, as you'll see from my résumé.

I am attaching a copy of my research summary that demonstrates deeper particulars of my technical abilities. Those skills, coupled with my passion, writing and literature research skills, and ability to create dynamic collaborations are assets I would like to bring to a strategic energy company like ExxonMobil.

I look forward to talking with you more about the position and company at your information session and would love to interview with you on campus. I greatly appreciate your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

*Ebony Rodgers*

Ebony Rodgers

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## EXAMPLE: PhD Chemist

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March 23, 20xx

Dr. Chea Chee  
Personnel Recruitment Manager  
XYZ Laboratories  
1234 Flower Street  
Cincinnati OH 45201

Dear Dr. Chee:

I expect to receive my doctoral degree in Analytical Chemistry in June 20xx, and am writing to explore the possibility of employment as an Analytical Chemist at your Cincinnati location. XYZ Laboratories has always demonstrated a commitment to quality and innovative research, as well as innovative instrumentation in particular, and I am excited at the prospect of being part of your team.

During my coursework at the University of Illinois, I began to consider future employment with XYZ Laboratories. We used many of your instruments in our laboratory research, and I found their design, precision, and reliability impressive. I'm well qualified for a job with your organization—with the confidence, judgment, and references to back up my qualifications.

In addition, I have had the great opportunity to collaborate with colleagues at several universities throughout the country and to present at numerous conferences, as shown on my résumé. I noticed that collaboration and public speaking are both skills extremely important to this position and I look forward to utilizing these skills further.

The enclosed résumé provides details about my work experience and background. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how my education and experience can benefit your laboratories. I'll call within a week to discuss the possibility of an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Jon Tonemah*

Jon Tonemah

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