

# COVER LETTERS

A cover letter represents an important opportunity for you. It acts as a personal introduction to the employer. A well-written letter will win you important points towards getting an interview. It is the ideal place to focus on the specific skills you want to emphasize for a particular employer.

Here are some guidelines for writing a good cover letter:

1. Every resumé should be accompanied by an individualized, typed business letter printed on the same type of paper as your resumé. This letter should be addressed specifically to the person -- by name and title -- who will most likely be interviewing you for the job you have in mind. You can generally find out this information by calling the employer's place of business. If you are answering a blind newspaper advertisement in which the employer is not specified, you may address your letter "To whom it may concern," but only under these circumstances. **Remember!** Use the proper business letter form.
2. The cover letter should be neat and contain no misspellings or errors in grammar. An employer judges you on your ability to communicate and to present information. A cover letter gives you the chance to do both.
3. Your cover letter should not be too long or complicated and generally should not be more than one page. Use a clear typeface that is large enough for the employer to read easily. If possible, use the same typeface as your resumé. Avoid script and other exotic fonts.
4. Each cover letter will have a somewhat different slant, emphasizing the skills you have that are important for a particular type of employment. You may refer to information on your resumé that is pertinent to the position to which you are applying, but you do not need to repeat all the details listed on your resumé. Whenever possible, do some research on the organization or company before you write your cover letter. This research, which is an essential part of every job campaign, can be accomplished by studying the company's Web site, reading business periodicals, directories, annual reports or product brochures, or by contacting people in the organization.
5. Always close your cover letter with a request for an interview. If it is appropriate, suggest a specific time or reason such as, "I will be in your area from December 20 until January 10, and I would appreciate an interview with you during that time." Be assertive and follow up with a phone call.
6. Be sure to thank the employer for considering your application. Make a copy of each letter you send out and keep track of the date that you applied to each company.
7. **DON'T FORGET TO SIGN YOUR LETTERS** and type your name beneath your signature. Your address, email and/or telephone number should be included beneath your name.

# GENERAL FORMAT FOR COVER LETTERS

**Note:** There are many ways to write a cover letter. Cover letters vary in length and numbers of paragraphs, but generally should not exceed one page. The following are some suggestions on cover letter structure.

**First Paragraph** (1 or 2 sentences). In your initial paragraph, state the reason for the letter, name the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and indicate from which resource (Web site, college career center, news media, friend, employment service) you learned of the opening.

**Second Paragraph** (3 to 5 sentences). Tell the employer something about yourself and indicate why you are interested in the position, the company, its products, or its services. Above all, let the employer know what you can do for the company. If you are a recent college graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have some practical work experience, point out your specific achievements or unique qualifications. Refer to your resumé, but try not to repeat the information on it.

**Third Paragraph** (1 or 2 sentences). Refer the reader to the enclosed resumé or completed application. Indicate where the employer can obtain your references (from a placement office or from you), should references be necessary at this time. Be sure to have available a printed list of phone references should an employer prefer to call.

**Fourth Paragraph** (1 or 2 sentences; this can be combined with the third paragraph). Request a personal interview and be flexible as to the time and place. For example, state that you will be in the city where the company is located on a certain date and would like to set up an interview at that time, if this is the case. If this is not appropriate, request an interview at the employer's convenience. You might mention that you will call to see if this is possible. Be sure to follow up with a phone call to be sure that your letter and resumé were received and to demonstrate your interest in the position. Be active, not passive.

**Fifth Paragraph** (1 or 2 sentences). Finally, close your letter with a thank you and a statement which will encourage a reply, such as “ I look forward to your response.”

# SAMPLES OF OPENING SENTENCES FOR COVER LETTERS

I am writing to inquire about the possibility of employment in the Art Department of Pro Advertising, Inc.

\_\_\_\_\_

While researching your company online, I noticed that your Web site contains information on job opportunities in sales and marketing.

\_\_\_\_\_

I am writing to request an informational meeting with you regarding career opportunities in the field of human services.

\_\_\_\_\_

It has come to my attention through your advertisement in *Seven Days* that you are considering recent graduates for entry-level positions in writing and editing.

\_\_\_\_\_

I am very interested in applying for a position in the field of human resources.

\_\_\_\_\_

I wish to be considered for the management-training program at IBM.

\_\_\_\_\_

My recent conversation with Jacqueline Penny, a computer programmer with your company, has confirmed my interest in applying for a position at New Technologies, Inc.

**Sample Letter (Business Form)**

Be sure to center your letter top-to-bottom on the page!

April 23, 20\_\_

- 5 returns

Karen Celluloid  
Historic Film Archives  
Main Street  
Hollywood, ME 04777-1234

- 2 returns

Dear Ms. Celluloid:

- 2 returns

I am very interested in applying for the Assistant to Project Director internship you are offering at the Historic Film Archives.

- 2 returns

I will be graduating from Saint Michael's College in May with a B.A. in Fine Arts-Theatre and a minor in Journalism and Mass Communication. Through class assignments, I have been involved with stage design, lighting, TV and digital news reporting, as well as commercial advertisements. In addition, I have acquired practical experience in research and video production through an internship at The Media Group. This has given me an appreciation of the work involved in shooting and editing videotape. On a personal level, I am an avid reader with a strong interest in learning about and preserving past cultures and time periods. As a result of these experiences, I have developed a real appreciation for the arts and the way in which they enrich our lives. With my background and skills, I believe I can contribute to your organization.

- 2 returns

Enclosed is a copy of my resumé. References are available upon request from the Student Resource Center at Saint Michael's College at (802) 654-2547.

- 2 returns

I would appreciate an interview with you at your convenience. I will call you in the near future to see if this can be arranged.

- 2 returns

Thank you for your consideration.

- 2 returns

Sincerely,

***Monica Mello***

- 4 returns

Monica Mello  
Saint Michael's College  
Box 0000, Winooski Park  
Colchester, Vermont 05439  
(802) 654-0000

- 3 returns

enclosure

November 10, 20\_

Polly Tick  
Office of Senator Bernie Sanders  
1 Church Street  
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Ms. Tick:

I am writing to inquire about applying for an academic internship beginning in January 20\_. Public service is an area that I have been concentrating on while preparing for my bachelor's degree and I am very interested in gaining more practical experience.

As a Political Science major at Saint Michael's College, my academic background has shown me the importance of community and political activism. These beliefs have been exercised through my involvement with the Student Global AIDS Campaign and the community service program, MOVE. In my experience with the Saint Michael's student government, I have come to understand the importance of influencing change through understanding the needs of our campus community and implementing meaningful policies. I would appreciate the opportunity to continue serving my community and the people of Vermont by joining your office staff.

The resumé that I have provided will show my qualifications and past experience, but it does not convey adequately the high level of interest and motivation I have for politics. I hope that you will allow me to discuss this matter further in an interview.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

***Antonia B. Susan***

Antonia B. Susan  
Saint Michael's College  
Box 1234, One Winooski Park  
Colchester, VT 05439  
asusan@smcvt.edu

enclosure

# Shirley A. Holmes

411 Bird's Eye Drive • Colchester, VT 05439 • (802) 878-0000

Saint Michael's College • Box 0000 • Colchester, VT 05439 • (802) 654-0000 • sholmes@smcvt.edu

March 3, 20\_\_

Internship Coordinator  
Snoop Marketing Resources, Inc.  
13 Hidden Valley Road  
Newmarket, NH 03857

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is an application for the summer internship offered by Snoop Marketing Resources, Inc. I am very interested in applying my broad-based analytical and communication skills in a business environment.

I am currently a junior at Saint Michael's College with a major in Sociology and a minor in Spanish. In reviewing your Web site, I was intrigued by the *Virtual Newsstand*. I can see that this is one of the many tools your company uses in conducting market research that is thorough and accurate. It would be very exciting and instructive to work in an organization that employs such a variety of interesting approaches. I would also welcome the opportunity to utilize my work experience and language skills in such an innovative business environment.

Through my experiences in the workplace, I have demonstrated my ability to work as part of a team as well as independently. While a work-study student in both the Human Resources Office and the Purchasing Office, I was assigned projects ranging from reviewing and condensing the College vendor list to streamlining the ordering, tracking, and reconciliation process for employee airline tickets. I am currently working on an analysis of tuition remission for Saint Michael's employees by researching comparable policies at similar institutions. These projects have greatly enhanced my ability to synthesize data and produce focused reports. I believe that these experiences would enable me to make an effective contribution to your company.

I have attached my resumé along with two references from employers. I would appreciate the opportunity for an interview with you at your convenience. I can be contacted at my school address which is listed above.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

**Shirley Holmes**

Shirley Holmes

attachments

Heidi Happy  
Box 0000, Saint Michael's College  
One Winooski Park  
Colchester, VT 05439  
hhappy@smcvt.edu  
February 15, 20\_

Ms. Flannery Jerrard  
Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing  
c/o Human Resources Box 265  
One Winooski Park  
Saint Michael's College  
Colchester, VT 05439

Dear Ms. Jerrard:

In response to your posting, I wish to be considered for the position of Admission Counselor at Saint Michael's College. Enclosed are my resumé and transcript for your review.

I believe that my education at Saint Michael's, my past experience working with college-bound students, my interpersonal skills, and my extensive participation in a variety of activities make me an excellent candidate for this position. First and foremost, I believe that I emanate the spirit and enthusiasm for Saint Michael's that would attract students to this institution. Those around me are often remarking on my sociability, my creativity, and my dedication to any task that I set out to accomplish. With these as my strengths, I believe that I can represent Saint Michael's College to a variety of people in a range of settings.

I have been actively involved in every aspect of the Saint Michael's community and have gained many skills that would be of benefit to the position of Admission Counselor. I have headed up the Programming Board as the Secretary of Programming, planned and promoted social and educational events, generated creative ideas, and encouraged people to become more actively involved in our community.

From the rugby field to Board of Trustees meetings, I have gained valuable interpersonal skills. I have worked with a diverse group of people, ranging from eleventh grade United States History students to the many people I have met through the M.O.V.E. (Mobilization of Volunteer Efforts) extended service program. I believe that this versatility and real appreciation for Saint Michael's will contribute greatly to my success as an informed and enthusiastic ambassador for the College.

My areas of study at Saint Michael's have been American Studies and Secondary Education. Through my student-teaching experience and my summer counselor role at "Upward Bound," the program for college-bound teenagers with disadvantages, I have applied my liberal arts background to my dedication for youth. I feel very strongly that every student should have the opportunity to go to college, and I believe that I could greatly assist and encourage students to apply to Saint Michael's as their first choice.

I am highly motivated, responsible, and extremely dedicated to Saint Michael's College. I strongly believe that I am an excellent representative of the school and I am confident in my abilities to perform as an Admission Counselor. I look forward to meeting with you soon and speaking with you further about this position.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Sincerely,

*Heidi Happy*

Heidi Happy

enclosures

April 27, 20\_

Director, Human Resources  
Cure-All Laboratories  
25 Oak Lane  
Rouses Point, NY 12979

Dear Director:

Suzanne Smith, a regional sales manager at Cure-All, suggested I write to you regarding a possible full-time staff position in your sales department. I have heard a great deal about Cure-All over the years and know it is a well-respected and innovative leader in the pharmaceuticals industry. I would welcome the opportunity to begin my professional career with your company.

I am graduating from Saint Michael's College in May with a major in Economics. Through my academic training, I have acquired a firm understanding of business practices and an appreciation for the challenges that face a global industry such as pharmaceuticals. My previous employment has involved extensive retail sales with a focus on exceptional customer service. In addition, for the past two years, I have been employed at Dale Associates in Burlington, Vermont as a research assistant, a position that has made me familiar with a wide variety of resources and research tools related to health care. As a result of these experiences, I have developed the skills necessary to understand technical information and to create meaningful and productive relationships with clients, essential elements for success in a major pharmaceutical company.

I am enclosing my resumé in support of my application and references are available upon request. If my qualifications are of interest to you, I can be available for an interview at your convenience. I can be contacted at the address below until my graduation on May 15 or through my cell phone at any time.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Michael O. MacMoney*

Michael O. MacMoney  
Saint Michael's College  
Box 0000, One Winooski Park  
Colchester, VT 05439  
(802) 238-0000 cell  
mmacmoney@smcvt.edu

enclosure

February 2, 20\_

Bill Bonds  
Debt and Equity Markets  
Super Stocks  
Universal Financial Center  
250 Easy Street, 2nd Floor  
New York, New York 10281

Dear Mr. Bonds:

I am very interested in applying for the Debt and Equity Markets Analyst position. I was made aware of this unique program by visiting your Web site and contacting your company directly in New York City. I am a senior at Saint Michael's College pursuing employment options with a prestigious investment banking firm like Super Stocks. I will graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and a Minor in Finance.

The finance management program offered by Super Stocks will provide me with the necessary training and exposure to a wide variety of product groups. The Debt and Equity Markets Analyst position in particular would allow me the opportunity to apply the knowledge that I have gained during relevant employment and course work, especially my three internships. Along with my internships at Fidelity Investments and Bellwether, I have also worked for Deutsche Bank in London where I developed an appreciation for the fast-paced life on the trading floor. These experiences have helped me to form a solid understanding of the financial markets and various computer programs relevant to the field. As an analyst at Super Stocks, I can continue to develop my skills in global asset and wealth management while my goal-oriented attitude will benefit your organization.

Enclosed is a copy of my resumé. References are available upon request from the Student Resource Center at Saint Michael's College at (802) 654-2547.

I will call you in the near future to arrange an interview with the appropriate person at his or her convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Sarah Savvy*

Sarah Savvy  
Saint Michael's College  
Box 0000, Winooski Park  
Colchester, Vermont 05439  
(802) 654-0000  
ssavvy@smcvt.edu

enclosure

March 18, 20\_

Ms. Karen Helpme  
Director of Public Relations  
Big Shoe Corporation  
746 Toetapin Drive  
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Ms. Helpme:

I wish to be considered for the Public Relations Assistant position that was posted on your Web site. I believe that the combination of skills and experience I would bring to the Big Shoe Corporation could prove beneficial to you.

I will graduate in May from Saint Michael's College in Vermont with a B.A. in English. My communications experience has involved writing for various purposes, including literary analysis, fiction writing, hard news, features, sports, public relations, and corporate communications. Currently I am writing for both the College's online publication *the Echo* and literary journal *The Onion River Review*.

In addition to my academic experience, I have worked with the public in a variety of employment positions. While serving as a communications intern at The Greenback Group in New York City, I learned how to produce copy for the corporate arena while developing my business skills. With this background, I can make a strong contribution to the Big Shoe Corporation.

Enclosed is a copy of my resumé. A CD containing references, writing clips, and examples of my photographic work is available upon request.

I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss this matter in more detail. I will call you in the near future to see if this can be arranged.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

***Irene Inkwell***

Irene Inkwell  
Saint Michael's College  
Box 0000, One Winooski Park  
Colchester, VT 05439  
(802) 654-0000  
ii@smcvt.edu

enclosure

April 9, 20\_

Nicholas Slick  
Ace Communications  
100 Fifth Ave.  
New York, NY 10011

Dear Mr. Slick:

I am writing to inquire about career opportunities in the fields of marketing and advertising. I am very interested in working at Ace Advertising, specifically in the Art Department.

I will be graduating from Saint Michael's College in May with a major in Art and a minor in International Business. At Saint Michael's, I have developed a very unique educational experience that has combined the financial, theoretical, and practical aspects of a business education with the creativity and design theories of a fine arts education. I have also become proficient with the computer applications prevalent in these fields, particularly Adobe Photoshop, Dreamweaver, Flash, and QuarkXPress. As an intern at XYZ Communications, a major advertising firm in Burlington, Vermont, I was part of a creative team responsible for developing the graphic images illustrating the advertising copy for magazine and billboard promotions. During the previous summer, I studied in Venezuela where I acquired insight into the business and artistic forces affecting marketing and advertising, especially in the Latin American marketplace. As a result of these experiences, I am confident that I will bring both technical skills and a fresh perspective to the creative team at Ace Communications.

I am enclosing my resumé and a list of references. Written references and samples of my work are available upon request.

I would appreciate an interview with you at your convenience. I will be available at my campus address until my graduation on May 14. After that date, I can be reached at the permanent address on my resumé or through my cell phone, (716) 000-0000.

I look forward to speaking with you soon. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Arthur Palette*

Arthur Palette  
Saint Michael's College  
Box 0000, One Winooski Park  
Colchester, VT 05439  
(802) 654-0000  
apallett@smcvt.edu

enclosure

April 13, 20\_

Jennifer Marks  
Superintendent, Basics North Supervisory District  
10 Apple Lane  
Ourtown, VT 01234

Dear Ms. Marks:

I am writing to express my interest in and excitement about a possible elementary teaching position in the Basics North Supervisory District for the 20\_ school year. I will have completed all requirements for my Vermont Elementary Teaching Licensure upon my graduation in May.

As a psychology and elementary education double major at Saint Michael's, I have attained a significant understanding of child development and pedagogy. While working in elementary classrooms, I have had the opportunity to observe a variety of teaching styles and to teach in schools with widely varying curricula and philosophies. I have benefited from the advice of teachers, learning specialists, and administrators in very different classroom environments, private and public, urban and rural. Moreover, I have learned how to incorporate a variety of approaches into my teaching: personal reflective and writing time, collaborative group work in brainstorming, researching, and organizing information, class discussions, and animated, teacher-directed learning.

During my student-teaching semester, I worked with students of all ability levels while helping them to meet the Vermont Standards in all content areas. My academic background has given me a high level of confidence in my ability to teach students in various grades and I am comfortable integrating art, music, and technology into a traditional curriculum where appropriate.

Throughout my college career, I have exhibited leadership skills which I fully expect to take with me into any school environment. I have always been a strong advocate of and participant in community service. While at Saint Michael's, I have been part of the M.O.V.E. (Mobilization of Volunteer Efforts) core team and have participated in the Extended Service Program, volunteering in rural Kentucky and Selma, Alabama during spring break. These opportunities have made me knowledgeable and sensitive to the diverse cultural, social, and learning needs of elementary-age children. I have come to recognize and appreciate the value of maintaining a strong home-school relationship and I have worked hard to nurture this among my own students and their families. I firmly believe in being involved in my school community well beyond the classroom so that I may provide a supportive and effective learning environment for each child in my care.

I have submitted a copy of my resumé, an unofficial transcript, and three letters of recommendation on my Schoolspring account. I would appreciate an interview with you at your convenience. I will be returning to my home in New York following my graduation on May 12. However, I can be contacted at my campus address prior to that date.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
*Amanda Peach*  
Amanda Peach  
Saint Michael's College Box 0000  
Colchester, VT 05439  
(802) 654-0000  
apeach@smcvt.edu

attachments

June 1, 20\_

George Washington  
AmeriCorps\*VISTA  
CEDO-Room 32  
City Hall  
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Mr. Washington:

I am very interested in participating in an AmeriCorps\*Vista program beginning this August. Please consider me for the following positions: *Development Coordinator*, Boys and Girls Club of Burlington; *Mentoring Coordinator*, Burlington High School; and *Development Coordinator*, Sara Holbrook Community Center.

I recently graduated from Saint Michael's College with a B.A. in Religious Studies and a minor in Philosophy. My academic background in these fields has shown me the importance of being engaged in my community. My involvement in community service has been extensive, including four years with the Saint Michael's College volunteer program M.O.V.E., The DREAM Program, and my work with children since I was in high school. I think it is especially important that we give our youth the support, attention, and outlets for self-expression they need to become healthy well-rounded adults. In working with the aforementioned organizations, I believe I have had a positive impact on the lives of young people and an AmeriCorps\*Vista program will allow me to continue to serve my community.

Enclosed are a copy of my resumé, a completed application, and references. I will be living in the Burlington area and continuing my work at the Saint Michael's Early Learning Center. If you wish to contact me, I can be reached through my cell phone number 238-0000.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

***Don Diego de la Vega***

Don Diego de la Vega  
10 Granite Court  
Burlington, VT 05401  
ddvega@hotmail.com

enclosures