



**Career Services**  
Trinity College: Hartford, CT

# Write a Cover Letter

## WHAT SHOULD YOUR COVER LETTER DO FOR YOU?

*It should answer the question – “Why should I hire you?”*

*It should grab the employer’s attention by providing your understanding of the company/organization and by directly relating your qualifications to the position.*

YOUR ADDRESS

TODAY’S DATE (Should be spaced after your address)

Mr./Ms. EMPLOYER’S NAME (If you don’t have one, get one!)

TITLE

COMPANY’S NAME

ADDRESS

DEAR Mr./Ms. EMPLOYER’S LAST NAME: (Be sure to use a colon!)

**FIRST PARAGRAPH:** This is the "why I'm writing to you" paragraph which immediately tells the employer the position for which you want to be considered. This is short - usually 2-3 sentences. Points to cover:

- Why you are writing and which position you are applying.
- How you learned about the position is irrelevant unless it is a mutual contact or recruiting program. Do not write, “I learned of this opportunity through the Career Services Office.”
- Prove you have researched the company by including a brief piece of information relevant to the position. The goal is to make a connection - do this *Briefly* and *Specifically* or leave it out; sweeping statements will not work. Try standing out from the crowd and make the employer intrigued enough to continue reading.

**SECOND PARAGRAPH:** This is the "what makes me qualified" paragraph. Explain in as few words as possible what you have to offer the company, emphasizing your accomplishments rather than your goals. Highlight 1 - 2 points about **Specific** qualities, experiences, or accomplishments, and provide **Specific** examples to support those points. This paragraph will change according to the position for which you are applying. You may break this paragraph into two if it is too lengthy or if your points work best in separate paragraphs.

- The first sentence should be a hard-hitting opener. It is a quick introduction, which is accomplishment-oriented and directed at the skills and qualifications needed for the job/industry.
- The body should provide evidence to back up what you've just claimed. Cite specific jobs, internships, activities, projects and accomplishments associated with those experiences. Use your resume to come up with some specifics, but NEVER reiterate passages from your resume word for word. Relate your qualifications to the job you are applying for - ***Strong examples are important!***
- The final sentence is a summary of what you've discussed above. It's a good idea to mention the position title and company name to bring the reader back to the specific job in question.

**FINAL PARAGRAPH:** This is a short 2 - 4 sentence paragraph. Refer to the enclosed resume (and other requested items), request an interview and let the reader know what will happen next (Contact them within specific period of time unless it is a recruiting program). Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Your Signature* (Don’t forget to sign your name!)

Your Name

Enclosure(s)

# SAMPLE COVER LETTERS

286 North 75<sup>th</sup> St. – Apt 5L  
New York, NY 10021  
212-555-9988

January 29, 2001

Mr. Ralph Cantor  
Executive Vice President  
Aspen Magazine  
321 Marzio Road  
Mohonk, NY 12561

Dear Mr. Cantor:

I am extremely interested in Aspen Magazine's Editorial position and believe my solid experience in journalism coupled with my love for the outdoors will be highly beneficial to the magazine.

Throughout my four years at Trinity College, I have actively been a part of student journalism from many different aspects. My interest was sparked in high school and I have continued to expand my horizons in college. Since then I have developed solid editorial, pictorial and writing skills, all vital to a weekly publication. After working on the Trinity Recorder for only one month, I was promoted to managing editor. Taking on this extra responsibility has enhanced not only my writing skills, but also my interpersonal and investigative skills, which are critical for any reporter.

In addition to my extracurricular activities, I have a passion for the outdoors. I have been fortunate enough to travel and experience some of the world's best skiing locally and internationally. With my passion for journalism and the great outdoors, my strong leadership and academic talents, I am confident I can make a significant contribution to Aspen Magazine.

Enclosed is a resume outlining my qualifications and achievements as well as recent personal publications. I look forward to meeting you in order to further discuss the position and my qualifications. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Sylvia Maldonado*

Sylvia Maldonado

Enclosure

# SAMPLE COVER LETTERS

Trinity College #700000  
Hartford, CT 06106-3100

January 25, 2001

Mr. Andres Delombard  
Director of Recruiting  
Eastern PG Consulting Group  
225 East 72<sup>nd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10098

Dear Mr. Delombard:

Laura Flannigan suggested I contact you concerning my interest in the Research Analyst position with Eastern PG Consulting Group. I am exceptionally impressed with the company's emphasis on a team-oriented culture, and I am confident that I would make a meaningful contribution as a member of the team. A career in economic consulting would give me the opportunity to best capitalize on the following skills:

- **Quantitative/Analytical Ability** – Analyzed and quoted stock activity for NYSE and NASDAQ companies, such as Bigsby Inc. and Solomon Bailey. Extensive experience working with brokerage firms. Created and maintained databases that tracked economic statistics and personal account information.
- **Written/Oral Communication** – Designed and presented a written presentation for the launch of Windows 98 to senior management to win the Weber Proposal Contest at Washington University.
- **Computer/Consulting Experience** – Educated students and faculty on hardware, software, and networking applications as an Academic Computer Consultant and Staff Assistant at Trinity College. Solved computing and networking crises, developing excellent crisis-management abilities.
- **Leadership and Enthusiasm** – Guided the recruitment and development of many racers, as Captain of the Trinity Crew Team. Executed several strategy changes in the team's economical and physical makeup, enabling the bottom ranked team to rise to the fourth place position within a twelve-team conference.

Enclosed is my resume for your review, I will contact you the week of February 15<sup>th</sup> to provide you with further information or to schedule a possible interview. Thank you for your time and consideration

Sincerely,

*Alec Michaels*

Alec Michaels

Enclosure

## HELPFUL HINTS:

- Research the company and the specifics about the position so you can tailor your letter to the needs of the organization. By researching the company, you show the employer that this position is important to you.
- Avoid using too many sentences that start with "I" or writing in the passive voice (ex. "This experience enabled me to..." or "Through my internship, I was responsible for..."); instead, make yourself the subject of each sentence and use active descriptions (ex., "In this internship, I demonstrated sound judgment and problem-solving skills on a daily basis.").
- Write each cover letter separately, even if you use a common framework. Personalize the letter with a sentence or two designed to reflect your sincere interest in the specific employer.
- Do not use contractions (I'd, didn't, it's).
- Spelling, grammar, or punctuation mistakes are out of the question! Cover letters are a reflection of your writing skills, so make each cover letter an example of your best work.
- Be sure to sign your letters. (Black ink is suggested)
- Keep your letter short and simple. This is not the time to tell your whole life's story.
- Use good quality paper that matches your resume paper and envelopes.
- Have a Career Specialist review your cover letters. Make an appointment anytime OR come in during drop-in hours: Monday-Friday 12:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Keep copies of everything you send, and follow up according to your stated intentions. However, don't rely too heavily on cover letters to get your job. Pursue other avenues of inquiry as well.

## SOME RESOURCES IN THE CSO LIBRARY:

Sample Cover Letters by Trinity Students (blue binder)

Cover Letters that Knock 'Em Dead by Martin John Yate

Job Search Secrets by Kate Wendleton

Dynamic Cover Letters for New Graduates by Katharine Hansen

## SOME RESOURCES ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB:

- [www.eresumes.com/tut\\_ecoverletters.html](http://www.eresumes.com/tut_ecoverletters.html)
- [www.e-cv.com/submit.html](http://www.e-cv.com/submit.html)

Check out the Trinity College Career Services Homepage at <http://www.trincoll.edu/dept/career>