



CANISIUS UNIVERSITY

Professional Correspondence Guide

What Is A Cover Letter?

This type of professional correspondence introduces you and your resume to the organization that you wish to join. It is important to remember that this is **not a duplication of your resume**; rather it expands on what you have to offer an organization and why they should interview, and ultimately hire, you.

A cover letter allows you to show the organization that you understand how your experiences parallel their requirements, and how you fit the organization's culture. You can do this by telling the company important personal experiences and skill sets related to the position's requirements and the organization's mission. **Every cover letter should be tailored for the specific opportunity and organization.**

Tips for Writing a Successful Cover Letter

1. **Show, Don't Tell.** Never just state you have experience; instead, show the employer you have the experience they seek.
2. **Focus on what you have to offer.** Instead of explaining what you can gain from this opportunity, explain to the employer how you can fulfill their needs and what you can do for them.
3. **Use keywords from the job description.** Directly connect your skills and experience to the job with these keywords.
4. **Do not reiterate information from your resume.** A cover letter is an opportunity to expand on what you have to offer and give additional information details they would not learn from your resume.
5. **Research the employer.** Show the employer you have done your homework on their company. Tell them what you respect about the company.

Cover Letter Template

<<Your Header Goes Here>>

(Branding should be the same on both your cover letters and resume)

Month Date, Year

→ *Align all letter text to the left.*

Mr. / Ms. First Last Name

Title

Organization Name

Address

City, State Zip

Dear Mr. /Ms. Last Name:

(Note: If the name is not available, use Dear Organization Name Representative;)

The **opening paragraph** should spark the interest of the individual reading your letter! State the position you are applying for, how you learned of the opportunity, and what you respect about the organization. If you are applying through or because of a contact, be sure to mention the contact's name in the first few sentences. Express your interest in both the organization and the position. Also, make sure to mention something unique/ an aspect you respect about the organization that prompted you to apply.

→ *Make sure to proofread for spelling and grammar errors!*

The **middle paragraphs** should create a desire on the part of the employer to know more about you. Establish the connection between the organization's needs and your experience and skills. Emphasize what you have to offer, not what you want, and why it should matter to them. Utilize keywords from the job description to show the employer what you have to offer.

The **closing paragraph** should state a clear path of communication to you so the employer will be able to reply to you at his/her discretion. Restate your interest in the position. Be sure to thank them for their time and consideration in the review of your application materials.

Sincerely,

(Sign here)

Your name here

→ *Sign your name on a white sheet of blank paper. Scan it, then crop the image. Insert it into the document here and save your cover letter as a .pdf prior to sending via email.*

Length should never exceed one page.

Sample Cover Letter

Peter Canisius

petercanisius@canisius.edu

(716) 888-2174

September 16, 20XX

Mr. Toni Murray

Human Resources Recruitment Manager

1 News Plaza

Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Mr. Murray:

I am applying for the position of News Reporter, which I learned about through Professor Bruce Andriatch at Canisius College. I am a native of the Buffalo area, and am excited by the prospect of working for an organization that is truly dedicated to the community in which it resides. As a journalist, I strive to live by your mission statement: “to provide news and information to the community we serve, and to report it honestly, accurately, and fairly.”

While completing my internship at WBFO, I had the opportunity to co-write an article with award-winning journalist Mike Desmond. Amidst the 2021 Buffalo mayoral election, Mr. Desmond and I interviewed Mayor Bryon Brown on conflicting statements he made throughout his campaign. During the interview, I had to ask tough questions concerning these statements. I worked in a fast-paced environment to ensure this article met its deadline and I reported on this issue accurately and honestly.

Recently, I worked on a freelance article for *The Buffalo Spree*. I connected with Elizabeth Licata and pitched my idea to her about covering the consignment shops located in Buffalo. I had to connect with multiple stores and conduct various interviews. Additionally, I had to capture photos of the consignment shops I covered. To make this article creative and innovative, I also created a graphic to coincide with this piece.

These experiences have prepared me to take on the role of News Reporter at *The Buffalo News*. I am confident you will find my reporting and technical skills will be an asset to this organization. If I am hired, I will be able to produce creative and innovative articles for your subscribers. I look forward to having the opportunity to interview you for this role. I will follow up with you next week but can be reached at (716) 888-2174. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Canisius

Peter Canisius

Sample Cover Letter

Petey Griffin

(716) 888-2170 □ peteygriffin2@canisius.edu

October 20, 20XX

Mr. John Jones
Director of CS Technologies
87 Ridgeway Avenue
Albany, NY 10059

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am applying for your Sales Internship opportunity, which I learned about through Professor Josh Evans at Canisius College. Your summer internship aligns with my prior customer service experience and with the management coursework I have completed. I am excited by the prospect of working for an organization that is truly dedicated to creating a pleasant experience for its customers.

I have worked at Verizon Wireless as a Customer Service Representative for two years. In this role, I provided customers with solutions to their technology needs, and offered products to enhance their experience, which generated more revenue for the company. I assisted a customer who was frustrated with their iPhone and was able to work through this issue with her. Due to my excellent customer service skills that were applied to this situation, I was commended by management and was named "Employee of the Month."

Recently, I worked on developing a marketing plan with four classmates for a fictional medical product. I assisted with the delegation of tasks, resolved group conflicts, and wrote the situation analysis. I am excited to apply what I have learned about the industry and how to increase sales through this process to your organization.

Between my customer service and leadership skills, I would be a great fit for this role and an asset to your organization. I would enjoy the opportunity to speak with you regarding the internship opportunity in your sales department. I look forward to having the opportunity to interview with you for this role. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me via phone at (716) 888-2170. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me about this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Petey Griffin

Petey Griffin

Bulleted Cover Letter Sample

Iggy Loyola

iggyloyola@canisius.edu | (716) 888-2174

November 1, 20XX

Ms. Mary Smith

Human Resources Director

Univera Healthcare

205 Park Club Lane

Buffalo, NY 14221

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am applying for the position of Systems Analyst, which was advertised through Handshake at Canisius College. I applaud your mission to improve the health of members of our community and am eager to contribute my technical skill set to assist you in achieving that goal.

The position requires experience in computer systems, financial applications software, and end-user consulting. As a Computer Science major, I gained lots of experience inside and outside of the classroom. My professional skills include the following:

- Proficient in working with mainframes, minicomputers, and microcomputers as well as with a variety of software programs and applications
- Collaborated with Help Desk staff at Canisius College to resolve computer issues for the Canisius community in a professional and patient manner
- Analyzed the needs of Canisius and implemented solutions
- Gained exposure to complex computer operations and worked with a vast array of end users
- Obtained experience with financial computer-based systems as an intern in Computing Operations for M&T Bank

These experiences have prepared me to take on the role of Systems Analyst at Univera Healthcare, and I am confident that you will find that my technical and interpersonal skills will be an asset to this organization. I look forward to having the opportunity to interview with you for this role. If you wish to reach out to me with further questions, please give me a call at (716) 888-2174. Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Iggy Loyola

Iggy Loyola

Thank You Notes

Want to stand out to an employer?

Only a quarter of applicants write a thank you note to their interviewer, so why not be in that percent?¹ Many job seekers think that writing a thank you note is a waste of time—and hopefully, the job seekers you are competing with have that attitude. Why? Because it is wrong! 86% of employers surveyed by CareerBuilder stated that not sending a thank you note after an interview showed a lack of follow-through.²

Regardless of how the interview happened—in person, over the telephone, or via video conference—a prompt thank you to each interviewer increases your chances of securing the position.

When writing your thank you notes, make sure to...

- Retain professional courtesy and communication
- Personalize the note so that it reflects you listened, what you appreciated, and what excites you about the opportunity/ use specific examples or topics discussed if applicable
- Remind the interviewer of your skills/ experience
- Make the thank you note personalized to the company you interviewed for

Thank you notes also allow you to introduce information you neglected to mention in the interview and clarify anything you don't think you communicated well during the interview.

Should I write a note or send an email? You can do either. Emails are sometimes a better alternative because your interviewer will receive your note of thanks faster. Email has become the preferred method of communication between job-seeker and employers.

When should I send a thank you note? The thank you note should be sent within the first 24 hours after the interview.

Thank You Note Template

Dear Mr. / Ms. Last Name,

Thank you for your time today/yesterday to speak with me about the name of the opportunity position. I very much appreciated the opportunity to meet you and other team members' names if applicable, and to learn more about this role and how my skills and values will continue to strengthen your team.

[In these next few lines, reiterate important and related skill sets and experiences, and incorporate suggestions on what you would do when hired, if appropriate.] With my background and experience, I am confident that I could become a contributor to your team very quickly.

I am excited about this opportunity to join the organization name. Please do not hesitate to email or call me if you have any questions or need any additional information. Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name

¹ Flexjobs: <https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/do-you-still-need-send-thank-you-note-after-job-interview/#:~:text=To%20Send%20or%20Not%20to,survey%20by%20Robert%20Half%20International>.

² CareerBuilder: <http://employer.careerbuilder.com/JobPoster/Resources/page.aspx?pageever=ThankYouNoteEtiquette>

Thank You Note Sample

Dear Mr. Murray,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me yesterday to speak to me about the News Reporter position at *The Buffalo News*. I very much appreciated the opportunity to meet you and Sheila Rayam to learn more about this role and how my skills will continue to strengthen your team.

As mentioned previously, I have had lots of reporting experience through my internship at WBFO and the freelance work I have completed for *The Buffalo Spree*. I am not afraid to ask the tough questions since I have had the opportunity to interview Mayor Bryon Brown. If I were provided with this opportunity, I would be interested in reporting on the opioid epidemic in Buffalo. I was hoping to write a series of articles about this topic so that more people in this area will be educated on this issue.

I am excited about this opportunity to work alongside experienced journalists at *The Buffalo News*. Please do not hesitate to email or call me at (716) 888-2170 if you have any further questions or need additional information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Canisius

Letters of Acceptance and Refusals for Job Offers

While it is exciting to receive an offer, it is advised you do not accept or refuse an offer on the spot. Gather what additional information you need from the employer, and ask by when they will need to have your decision. You should then return the employer's call. Keep in mind an employer might ask for a submitted written acceptance or refusal of the position you have been offered.

If you are no longer interested in an opportunity you have applied to or interviewed for, you will want to let the employer know that you wish to be removed from consideration. By doing so you can save the recruiters some time in finding the next candidate.

Email Correspondence

Apply the following advice to every email you write...

1. Use a meaningful subject header that is appropriate to the topic and conveys why you are writing
2. Proofread and add any promised attachments to your email before sending
3. Be professional
4. Be brief in your communication
5. Do not use emoticons, slang, strange fonts, or multicolored backgrounds
6. Sign your email with your full name and include your contact information in your signature