

Career Services Center



# Cover Letters



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# Cover Letter Tips

## Do

- Keep letter on paper to one page (three to five paragraphs)
- Keep electronic letters to one screen view (three to five paragraphs)
- Use the same quality paper as you used for your resume
- Use a different version for different job types
- Use a clean, readable font of 10-12 points, such as Times New Roman, Palatino, or Arial
- Make every effort to address your letter to an individual
- Check your spelling, grammar, and punctuation!
- Prioritize your most relevant and qualifying experiences

## Don't

- Discuss personal information other than name, address, phone, and email
- Use the same generic letter for every job
- Use both sides of the page
- Forget to include your contact information
- Simply repeat your resume
- Forget to bring your cover letter to Career Services for a review!

# Cover Letter Hints

- Always include a cover letter with a resume/application that you are sending.
- Include name, title, address, of the person and organization to whom you are writing. If this information has not been provided, you may be able to get it from the receptionist in the organization.
- Use the formal greeting "Dear Ms./Mr./Dr. \_\_\_\_\_:"
- **1<sup>st</sup> paragraph: explain why you are writing to the employer.** Identify the position you are applying for or the vocational area of interest you are inquiring about. Identify how you heard of the opening or organization. Finally, identify why you decided to contact this employer.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph: explain to the employer why they should interview you.** Identify your skills, experiences, and qualities that relate to the position or area of interest. Highlight a few of your strongest qualifications and explain how they relate to the needs of the employer. Explain why you're interested in the employer and type of work/location. Do not simply restate the facts that are on your resume.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph: identify your next step.** Close the letter with a strong interest in pursuing the next step (i.e., an employment interview, informational interview, and/ or additional information or an application). Clearly state how you intend to follow-up.
- Use the professional format for closing, "Sincerely," with your name (typed) and your signature between the two.
- Use the word ENCLOSURE to indicate you're including a resume, application, etc.

# Advertised Position

123 Franciscan Terrace  
Winston-Salem, NC 27127  
March 17, 2008

Ms. Jody Jobhunt, Director of Training  
XYZ Corporation  
P.O. Box 1735  
Wilmington, NC 28403  
RE: Retail Management Trainee Position

Dear Ms. Jobhunt:

I am writing to express my interest in the Retail Management Trainee position you listed recently on RAMtrak. I have reviewed XYZ Corporation's web page, and I am very impressed with your company's commitment to excellent customer service and your employee development training program. I will be graduating from Winston-Salem State University in May and am actively seeking a retail management position.

As you will note in the enclosed resume, I have had meaningful practical experience in both retail sales and customer service. My positions at The Gap and Lucky 32 have given me the ability to work with a wide variety of clientele. In addition, I have completed several courses in Management while pursuing my Bachelor of Arts degree in Speech Communications. My experience as President of Alpha Chi Omega Sorority has also helped me to further development my leadership and organizational skills.

I would like to explore the Retail Management Trainee position with you further. I will be in Wilmington the week of March 4<sup>th</sup> and would like to have the opportunity to speak with you at the time. I will call next week to see if we might identify a mutually convenient meeting time. Should you need additional information, please call me at (336) 123-9876. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

**John E. Student**

John E. Student

Enclosure: Resume

## Prospecting for Non-Advertised Position

1256 Old Salisbury Road  
Winston-Salem, NC 27127  
March 25, 2008

Ms. Jonna Employer  
XYZ Community Agency  
110 Main St.  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

Dear Ms. Employer:

I will be graduating from Winston-Salem State University next year and I am interested in gaining paid or unpaid practical experience at XYZ community agency during the upcoming summer break. I have lived in Winston-Salem for 3 years and have continuously heard positive remarks regarding the services offered by XYZ. Also, I have read your brochure and I was excited to learn of your commitment to improving the way of life for the elderly. This is a mission that I am dedicated to as well.

My major is -Social Work with a minor in Gerontology. I have always known that I wanted a career that would allow me to help others. My specific interest in the elderly population was solidified when my grandmother came to live with us during my junior year of high school. I am certain that I will utilize the concepts I have learned in my Gerontology courses at XYZ agency.

My resume is enclosed for your consideration. My education and deep commitment to the welfare of others matches the qualifications you seek in your staff members. The feedback I have received from professors and past work supervisors makes me confident that I have strong, effective interpersonal skills and can make a significant contribution to the population your serve.

I know how busy your must be, but I would appreciate a few minutes of your time. I'd like to call you the week of May 11 to discuss possible volunteer or employment opportunities at your convenience. In the meantime, I can be reached via e-mail at [student@wssu.edu](mailto:student@wssu.edu) by phone at (336) 987-6543. Thank you for your considering my request.

Sincerely,

*Natalie Student*

Natalie Student

# Hiring Agency

1256 Shattalon Road  
Winston-Salem, NC 27106  
April 10, 2008

Mr. Daniel Employer  
Vice President  
XYZ Temporary Agency  
110 Main St.  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

Dear Mr. Employer:

I am seeking an entry-level position in public relations or event planning. Ideally, I would like a position with the potential to become a permanent employee. However, I would also be a highly productive member as a temporary employee. Perhaps one of your current or future clients may have an interest in my qualifications and enthusiasm.

I will be graduating this May with a B.A. in Mass Communications and have had extensive planning and public speaking experience while participating in many extracurricular activities. As part of my program at Winston-Salem State University, I have explored theories and uses of verbal, nonverbal, written, visual, and electronic communication. I feel certain that my broad range of capabilities could be utilized by one of the employers you serve.

If one of your clients seeks a highly-motivated candidate to help plan an event or needs a public relations specialist, perhaps you will think of me. I would appreciate your retaining my file for review if you do not presently have a good fit for me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*John E. Student*

John E. Student

Enclosure

# Networking

1256 Old Salisbury Road  
Winston-Salem, NC 27127  
March 25, 2008

Mr. Gregory Employer  
Activities Coordinator and Manager  
Great Yarmouth Country Club  
123 Browston Hall  
Winston-Salem, NC 27103

Dear Mr. Employer:

Lurina Gotit, a close friend of mine, suggested that I contact you. Lurina and I were roommates while in a Study Abroad program in Norfolk last semester. We have also become close friends while participating in Women's Club Volleyball and Soccer at WSSU, and I understand that you share our interest in recreational sports.

I am currently working towards a B.S. in Sport Management. Last week I mentioned to Lurina that I am having trouble deciding between a concentration in Sport Communication and Therapeutic Recreation. Since Lurina had such a great experience being supervised by you at Great Yarmouth Country Club, she suggested that I contact you to learn more about the day-to-day operation of a leisure-related business.

As you can see from the enclosed resume, I have been involved in many leadership positions which have helped me to develop strong interpersonal and organizational skills. I am anxious to learn more about Sport Communication and whether my skills, interests, and experiences will match well. Additionally, I feel as though I may need related workplace experience to know for sure where I can contribute the most. Perhaps you may be aware of someone who is currently seeking an intern for the summer or fall in any area of recreation. If not, I would appreciate your suggesting some key contacts within the industry whom I should approach.

I will contact your office during this coming week to discuss the possibility of a meeting, perhaps over lunch. I look forward to the prospect of speaking with you personally.

Sincerely,

*Natalie Student*

Natalie Student

Enclosure

# Follow-up Letter

1256 Old Salisbury Road  
Winston-Salem, NC 27127  
September 12, 2008

Mr. Robbie Employer, Recruiting Coordinator  
Secure Financial Services  
985 Securities Lane  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

Dear Mr. Employer:

I want to thank you for taking the time to speak with me at the WSSU Career and Cooperative Education Fair yesterday. I enjoyed meeting you and learning more about the financial services Secure provides. I am impressed with your firm's dedication to customer satisfaction and the emphasis your firm places on integrity and commitment to the welfare of your employees.

My enthusiasm for working for Secure Financial has increased as a result of our conversation. I think my degree in finance, along with my internships at Reliability Financial and Federation Banking, has provided me with the financial knowledge and communication skills necessary to fulfill the position requirements of a financial planner. I am confident that I can make a significant contribution to your firm in providing quality financial planning services to your customers.

I want to reiterate my strong interest in this position and in working with you and your staff. You provide the kind of career opportunity in the financial industry that I seek. Please contact me at (336) 987-6543, or email me at [nstudent@wssu.edu](mailto:nstudent@wssu.edu) if you need any additional information. Thank you for your consideration. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Natasha Student*

Natasha Student

Enclosure

# Career Services Center

## **Career Services Center**

- Career Fairs: Full-time/Part-time Jobs & Internships
- Experiential Learning Programs – Coops and Internships
- On-Campus Recruiting - RAMtrak
- Job Location and Development – Part-time Jobs
- Mock Interviews
- Resume Critiquing
- Student Volunteer Service Program – Project Give
- Workshops

## **Career Services Office**

301 Thompson Center  
336-750-3240  
careersvcs@wssu.edu

[www.wssu.edu](http://www.wssu.edu)

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