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CAREER SERVICES

COVER LETTER



Career Services |



University
of Manitoba

Market yourself: Your cover letter

What is a cover letter?

A cover letter is a targeted one-page document which highlights the skills you possess that are most relevant and important to the specific employer you are applying to. It introduces your resumé and shows your passion for the position. The best strategy is to begin by writing your **resumé** first, and then write your cover letter.

Write Your Resumé First

Use our online [Resumé Workbook](#) or visit the [Resumé Learning Centre](#).

Your cover letter should:

Encourage further reading	Focus on what you can do for the employer, not what the employer can do for you	Be concise	Be professional
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Cover letter components

Your cover letter is made up of various components which should come together to market you as the ideal candidate for the position you are applying to.

The set up

Points to mention	Explanation
Personal letterhead	Match this to your resumé letterhead. It includes your name (large font and prominent), address, phone number, email (only if professional sounding and checked regularly), LinkedIn URL and EPortfolio URL (if you have them).
Date	Include the date you are writing the cover letter.
Address line	Address your letter to the hiring manager by name – if you don't have the name, it is best to contact the organization and ask. If you can't find their name, use one of these: "Hiring Manager", "Human Resources" or "Selection Committee."
Company name	Include the company name (and department, if relevant).
Dear...	Address the person, for example, "Dear Ms. Smith," or "Dear Hiring Manager."

See [Appendix A: Cover Letter Samples](#) for a labelled example.

The Content

Introduction

Grab their attention with a creative opening statement. Indicate why you are applying to them.

Include the job posting number or reference number (if applicable) and indicate how you heard about the job (posting, networking contact, career fair, etc).

Explain why you want to work for the company or what interests you about the position.

Demonstrate knowledge of the organization – show them you have done your homework.

Body

Summarize the skills and abilities you have as required for the position and demonstrate with specific examples – explain why you would be an excellent fit for the role! Your targeted resumé can assist you: expand on your three most important skills.

Describe skills that make you unique or that make you stand out which are related to the job – be specific in what you claim so that you sound genuine and knowledgeable.

Use [**Appendix B: Skills Matching Worksheet**](#) to pinpoint your specific qualifications.

Conclusion

Thank them for considering your application.

Indicate that you look forward to the opportunity for an interview and outline how you can be contacted.

If you are seeking job opportunities in the hidden job market, it is strongly recommended you indicate how and when you will contact the employer in order to follow up. See the [**Cold Call example letter, Appendix B**](#), as a resource.

Check out [**Appendix A: Cover Letter Samples**](#) or find even more at [**The Resume Learning Centre**](#).

Cover letter tips

<p>1. Always write a cover letter</p> <p>Every resumé you submit should include a cover letter unless otherwise indicated.</p>	<p>2. Address to a specific person</p> <p>Find the name of the hiring manager. If you can't find their name, say "Dear Hiring Manager." Never use "To whom it may concern."</p>	<p>3. Match your resumé</p> <p>Use the same font, style, and letterhead as your resumé.</p>	<p>4. One page</p> <p>Keep it concise and attractive. Most cover letters can be written in 1 page. Typically, 2 page cover letters are only used by those with extensive experience, probably later in their career or for government postings.</p>
<p>5. Tailored</p> <p>You need to write a new, tailored cover letter that is specific to each job you apply for.</p>	<p>6. Use employer "language"</p> <p>Use the job posting or company information to determine what they are looking for – use their words to describe your skills.</p>	<p>7. Prove it</p> <p>If you say you are a "fast learner," give them an example!</p>	<p>8. Be confident</p> <p>Describe what you have to offer with confidence. You are marketing yourself to the employer – be sure to clearly outline your relevant skills.</p>

Tip:

Show off your professional personality. Your cover letter should showcase your writing style and personality. You are writing a document to prove you are a strong candidate for the position, and part of that is standing out from the crowd.

E-mailing your cover letter and resumé

Clearly indicate in the subject heading the purpose of your email (e.g. RE: Customer Service Application, Competition # 34567 Anna Choo). In the body text of the email, provide a short message to the employer indicating what documents are attached and to which position(s) you are applying. If you need an example, find one in our [Resumé Learning Centre](#). Be sure to save your cover letter and resumé as a single PDF. This will ensure your formatting is consistent and all pieces of the application stay together. The file name should include your full name and refer to the position you are applying for so it is easy for the employer to find.

Remember to proofread and send a test e-mail to yourself of all versions of your resumé before you send it to an employer!

Appendix A: Cover letter samples

Anita Career

201 – 110 Job Search Road
 Small Town, MB R7N 2C4
 (204) 555-0989 AnitaCareerAbc123@cc.umanitoba.ca

Personal
letterhead

Date

June 12, 20XX

Contact
name/title,
company, &
address

Ms. Nicole Chau
 Human Resource
 Health Policy Research Centre
 398 Main Street
 Winnipeg, MB R4L 2X9

Dear...

Dear Ms. Chau,

Introduction

I am extremely interested in the Research Assistant opening at the Health Policy Research Centre, competition A3421, as advertised on your website. Your organization has an outstanding record of high calibre research which regularly impacts the way local health institutions and governments deliver health services to Manitobans. I believe that my psychological research experience coupled with my strong interpersonal skills would make me an excellent addition to your team.

- ✓ Job title
- ✓ Posting#
- ✓ Why this company
- ✓ 2 skills

Body

I am particularly intrigued by the research being done on the intersection between poverty and youth mental health. I have studied these topics extensively in my psychology degree – often citing Health Policy Research Centre publications in my writing on the subject. Beyond this, I have strong statistical analysis skills. I have been trained in all areas of statistical analysis, utilizing various tools in my previous research experience, which I presented at the Manitoba Youth Symposium. I have a talent and a passion for research, which I would enthusiastically bring to my work with your organization.

- ✓ Explain unique skills needed at company
- ✓ Prove skills, going beyond resumé

My knack for research is enhanced by my ability to work with others. I have honed my communication skills through my supervisory experience in the service industry and consistently demonstrated teamwork in my extensive volunteer experience. Further, by volunteering with Open Door Society, I not only developed the ability to be an effective listener, but also worked closely with stakeholders in your research. I gained insight into the experiences of the low socioeconomic status youth which are central to your research as well as the community health agencies who serve them. This makes me uniquely qualified to research this subject.

- ✓ Relate skills back to needs of company

Conclusion

I am confident that I have the qualifications and skills that are a great match for this position. I look forward to meeting with you in an interview to further discuss this exciting opportunity. Thank you for your time and consideration.

- ✓ Say thank you
- ✓ Mention Interview

Sincerely,

Anita Career

KIM HOCHBAUM

14 River Avenue ✎ Winnipeg ✎ Manitoba ✎ R4T 3M5
(204) 555-7676 ✎ khochbaum@hotmail.com

April 1, 2018

Mr. Anthony Kuzak
Human Resources Manager
Fairfield Foods
Landmark, Manitoba

Dear Mr. Kuzak,

I was introduced to the Specialist in Manufacturing opening at Fairfield Foods by Amy Yang, Swine Care Manager at your company. My discussion of this opportunity with Ms. Yang made me both excited about working at such a strong and environmentally responsible company and also made me confident that my skills would be an excellent addition to your organization.

I will be graduating from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture this May. This has given me extensive education in all areas of animal care, farm management, and agricultural business. My field experience compliments my strong academic background. As a Farm Assistant, I maintained animal care in accordance with all farm and government standards, ensuring the health and cleanliness of livestock and poultry. I also became familiar with the use and maintenance of various types of farm equipment. Beyond this, I have gained strong communication skills through working as an Interpreter at Fort Whyte Alive: I became acquainted with the unique Manitoban landscape and became able to effectively teach others about local wildlife. My passion for the outdoors and the agricultural industry has grown throughout my education and field experience. I would love to bring this drive to a position with Fairfield Foods.

My leadership skills would be a further asset to me in this position. I have successfully taken on numerous leadership roles: training new staff members, coaching teams, and chairing a committee. This has allowed me to develop as a leader who is able to be goal-oriented and aware of the needs of all team members.

I am enthusiastic about this opportunity and look forward to discussing it further with you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kim Hochbaum

Lyle Luxton
44 Swifton Way
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3A5
(204) 555-5555
Lyle.Luxton@hotmail.com

September 30, 20XX

Mr. Michael DeSafey
Sequence Systems
2008 Opportunity Drive
Futures, Manitoba R30 0E0

Re: Civil Engineer-Land Development Position, Reference #8422

Dear Mr. DeSafey:

I wish to apply for the Civil Engineer-Land Development position as advertised on your company website. I am attracted to Sequence Systems as an established engineering consulting firm that has a solid reputation within the area of land development across Western Canada. Please allow me to highlight my skills as they relate to your stated requirements:

Your Requirements

- Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering with a EIT registration.
- Civil Engineering experience in Land Development.
- Experienced with the design of residential, commercial, light industrial, roadway and infrastructure development projects.

My Experience

- Recent grad with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering and registered as EIT.
- Experienced in land development Projects during two summers, worked on detailed drawings, performed engineering calculations, tracked project requirements and timelines.
- Completed courses directly related to infrastructure and construction design, transportation and highway pavement design including project work.

I feel that the combination of my education, work experience and willingness to learn will allow me to make a major contribution to Sequence Systems. I look forward to the opportunity to further discuss this position with you in an interview and thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lyle Luxton

Appendix B: Cold call cover letter sample

Bob Johnstone

123 Linden Way • Winnipeg, Manitoba • R3B 3A5
(204) 287-1313 • bob@escape.ca

March 4, 2016

Ms. Veena Mani
Director, Design Engineering
Basic Computing International
1687 Bison Drive
Winnipeg, MB

Dear Ms. Mani,

I am extremely excited to offer my application for an Engineering Summer Student position at Basic Computing International. Your company is a world leader in the development of technology that is both innovative and easily used by the average consumer. It would be an honour to contribute my communication skills, leadership abilities, and coding expertise to the continued success of Basic Computing International.

Throughout my education, I strive to build my communication and leadership skills. In leadership roles at Shaw Cable and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, I worked continuously to ensure all projects were completed to the highest standards through motivating team members and being aware of their needs and talents. My communication skills shone in these experiences, as I attentively listened to others while also clearly explaining instructions and goals. In the Faculty of Engineering, I have worked as a Peer Mentor, a role in which strong communication skills are crucial in order to ensure new students succeed as they enter an unfamiliar academic environment. As a summer student at Basic Computing International, I would use these skills to manage projects with a communicative and efficient style.

My technical capabilities perfectly compliment my ability to work effectively with others. I am a strong coder with proficient or expert knowledge of all standard coding languages which I have demonstrated through extensive coursework and my previous summer position at MTS. Beyond this, I have high level skill in all areas of electrical schematics and computer design. As an innovative engineer, I would add my technical skill and creative eye to the exciting projects currently underway at your company.

Thank you for considering me for an opportunity with Basic Computing International. I hope to hear from you to discuss the position further, and will follow-up with you in the next couple weeks.

Sincerely,
Bob Johnston

Appendix C: Skills Matching Worksheet

For each of the skill areas below, reflect on examples of when you've used or developed the skill.

Written communication	I use this skill when...
Condense information/produce concise summary notes accurately with correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.	
Write letters and reports that are logically structured and contain all relevant information.	
Adapt writing style in consideration of different .	
Oral communication	I use this skill when...
Ask and answer questions, clarify, and summarize what others are communicating.	
Provide clear explanations and directions while instructing, educating and providing feedback.	
Communicate with others using a variety of communication strategies to negotiate, mediate, resolve difficult issues and sell ideas.	
Teamwork	I use this skill when...
Demonstrate respect and care. Is open and supportive of the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others.	
Actively contribute to team projects/tasks; fulfils required roles, participates in discussion to improve effectiveness.	
Accept and share responsibility. Learn from constructive criticism and give positive and constructive feedback.	
Leadership	I use this skill when...
Accept responsibility for decisions and display a positive attitude and perseverance.	
Models a strong desire to succeed by demonstrating adaptability to achieve goals.	
Take initiative in leading, supporting and motivating others in developing individual skills or tasks to achieve goals.	
Planning and organizing	I use this skill when...
Effectively apply organizing and planning skills to manage work.	
Work effectively to complete deadlines when under pressure.	
Proactively plans and manages work; monitors results through to successfully complete plans.	
Problem solving skills	I use this skill when...
Make decisions in accordance to accepted practices and guidelines.	
Use problem-solving strategies to identify and resolve problems, issues and determine solutions.	
Recognize inconsistencies in reasoning. Makes decisions in situations that fall outside established guidelines.	

Analysis and research	I use this skill when...
Gather relevant secondary data and organize information in a logical manner.	
Collect primary data and/or assist in carrying out surveys, focus groups, and lab analysis.	
Analyze samples/surveys for quantitative/qualitative research.	
Numeracy: able to carry out arithmetic operations/understand data	I use this skill when...
Perform calculations for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, and converting between fractions and decimals.	
Perform complex calculations and operations that require using advanced multi-step mathematical strategies.	
Analyze or compare numerical data to identify trends or compare statistics.	
Digital technology skills	I use this skill when...
Performs basic computer tasks, such as creating documents, saving files, and sending email.	
Design web pages and a wide range of software skills.	
Demonstrate in depth knowledge of computer software and information technology systems.	
Presentation skills	I use this skill when...
Present basic information to one or more people using appropriate resources, vocabulary, and non-verbal language.	
Prepare and present advanced information with clarity with the ability to respond to questions in a timely manner.	
Facilitate interactive presentations of advanced information customized to the interests and needs of the audience.	
Personal management	I use this skill when...
Demonstrate professionalism in recognizing expectations in work culture to maximize success in the workplace.	
Embrace new opportunities, learn continuously, and identify importance in every job/task.	
Anticipate the unexpected and respond quickly to sudden changes in circumstances.	
other	I use this skill when...