

Cover Letter Guide

OXY

Occidental College
Hameetman Career Center

Use the same header from your resume in case your documents get separated.

A Cover Letter is a formal letter which:

1. Explains your interest and motivation for pursuing the job.
2. Is the first contact with a prospective employer and showcases your writing skills.
3. Serves as an introduction to your background, training, and skills.

Susan Smith

1600 Campus Road Los Angeles, CA 90041 ssmith@oxy.edu (323) 555-123

October 12, 20xx

John Rodriguez, Internship Coordinator
Phil Dunphy & Co.
1234 Campus Road, Floor 5
Los Angeles, CA 90041

Dear Mr. John Rodriguez:

Address your cover letter to a specific person
*If no name is provided, address as, Dear Hiring Manager:

Step 1:

I would like to express my interest in applying for the position of Financial Analyst at Phil Dunphy & Co. (PDC). As I aspire to enter the finance industry, I believe that the opportunity to work closely with a team will strengthen my resolve to pursue a career in finance, whether it involves financial analysis or economic consulting. I am especially interested in how PDC focuses on constructive feedback and mentorship when developing financial analysts.

Step 2:

I believe that I can uniquely contribute to PDC with my background in both biochemistry and economics. My educational background in chemistry, biology, economics, and philosophy has given me the critical thinking skills necessary to approach difficult financial inquiries. Additionally, I have experience working in an independent research capacity. Over the past four years, I have collaborated with Dr. Michele Hall and Dr. Keith Smith on electrochemical projects. I have also analyzed the impact of Rwanda's Pay-for-Performance healthcare program with Dr. Diana Medina. These two research opportunities will help me excel at PDC because they have not only required me to analyze and review current literature, but they have also empowered me to act independently and resourcefully, both of which are invaluable qualities in the finance industry.

In addition to collaborating with professors at Occidental College, I have also worked with Dr. Harriet Walker at the University of Southern California on an independent project involving the use of organometallic ruthenium-based complexes as a way of generating green energy. By working alongside graduate students, I quickly adapted to an intensive work environment and successfully prepared and presented weekly reports to my laboratory group. In addition to research, I also lead Occidental College's chapter of Peer Health Exchange (PHE), an organization which trains college students to teach health education to local high schools. Peer Health Exchange helps me hone my public speaking skills while also empowering me to train and manage a college cohort of over 90 peers. While my experience in PHE has reinforced the importance of working in a team setting, it has also helped me understand that as the leader of the organization, I am responsible for the rest of the cohort. This understanding will translate to Phil Dunphy & Co. because ultimately, I know that although my team will support me and help me learn, I am responsible for my own work.

Step 3:

I look forward to further discussing your organization and all the ways I can be of service at Phil Dunphy & Co. I hope to hear back from you regarding my candidacy.

With Regards,

Susan Smith

Step 1: The Introduction

- Indicate **why you're contacting** the employer, **the position** you are applying for, and how you became **aware of this position**.
- Include the person who referred you to the position (if applicable).
- **Provide specifics** about why you are excited about applying to this position or this company.

Step 2: Their Need, Your Experience

- This is the **most important** section.
- Highlight the best evidence of your qualifications with **2-3 specific examples**. For example, if the job description requests someone with inventory software skills, give an example of how you've demonstrated/earned them.
- Address the job description by stating how your relevant **work/skills**, relevant **strengths**, and relevant **education and/or training** fit the role that you are applying for.
- You should choose to share **your qualities and characteristics** with the prospective employer. Give the reader a sense of who you are.

Additional Tips:

- **Avoid the overuse** of "I".
- Personalize; reflect your style by **balancing professionalism with personal warmth and friendliness**.
- Your cover letter may be the key to setting you apart.
- Be sure to submit a cover letter with your resume even if the employer does not require it, unless it states NOT to.
- Cover letters vary by industry, for additional assistance, come see a career counselor.

Step 3: Conclusion and Contact

- Show enthusiasm, reiterate interest, and state **where, when, and how** you can be contacted.
- Follow-up with a phone call or email after the closing date of the position.

Jacqueline Smith

Los Angeles, CA 90041 (323) 555-1234 jsmith@oxy.edu

January 25, 20xx

The Occidental Family
1600 Campus Road
Los Angeles, CA 90041

Dear Hiring Manager:

It is with great enthusiasm that I express interest in your company, the Occidental Family, headquartered in Los Angeles, CA. I am confident that my background in marketing and business development will truly exemplify the powerful level of creativity and commitment necessary to exceed company standards as a Marketing Associate. I am excited at the opportunity to work at a furnishings design and manufacturing company that encompasses several diverse brands. I will be receiving my Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Occidental College in May 2017 and I plan to pursue a career in marketing post-graduate. The Occidental Family offers a unique experience to further develop my marketing, project development and strategic abilities.

My previous work experience is rooted in marketing and business development. In the summer of 2015, I worked as an Account Sales Intern for Center Theatre Group, in which I was responsible for researching and helping develop business through ticket sales for the many shows that CTG offers. I coordinated promotional packaging for potential clients and assisted in the execution of events. During the summer of 2016, I worked as a Marketing Intern for Warner Brothers Records. In that role, I generated statistical reports on current artists, researched competitors, and edited one sheets for artists. Both experiences taught me to become an efficient and detail-oriented multitasker and to attack any job required with a cheerful and professional manner.

My leadership experiences at Occidental College have taught me the value of working in a team. As Chief Financial Officer for my sorority Kappa Alpha Theta, I was responsible for all chapter finances, including member billing, budgets, and reimbursements. I have also served as Co-Treasurer for the Dance Production Club, a 250+ member, student-run dance organization, where I managed a \$25K budget. I currently am the Co-President of Dance Production and work with ten other executive board members throughout the year to produce a showcase in mid-March, which recently generated sales revenue of \$10K. These experiences have taught me the importance of teamwork and utilizing the strengths of each member for maximum efficiency and output. I have also learned how to plan and prioritize effectively in order to be as efficient as possible.

Finally, I have developed my knowledge of business skills by attending the Tuck Business Bridge Program at Dartmouth College last summer, a four-week intensive program taught by MBA faculty for undergraduate students. Through this program, I enhanced my knowledge of business skills by taking classes in spreadsheet modeling, accounting, marketing, and economics. The knowledge gained from this experience would help me analyze sales and marketing reports as a Marketing Associate for the Occidental Family.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at jsmith@oxy.edu. I look forward to learning about the next steps in the application process.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Smith