



## Key Elements of Successful Cover Letters

Your present address

City, State, Zip Code

*(The heading should match your current resume)*

Today's date

Individual's First & Last Name

Title Company

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. /Ms. Last Name:

**Introduction:** Begin your cover letter with a 'hook' – a sentence that immediately breaks the reader from their reverie and grabs their attention. There are a variety of ways to do this, whether it be by starting a story/anecdote, making a bold/interesting statement about yourself, starting off with a question that makes the reader think, saying that an employee (mention their name) recommended you apply, and many more methods that could differentiate you from the crowd. Avoid "I am writing to respond to this internship/full time job/open position..." You can specify what position you're interested in, but that is not the main point of this section.

**Body:** Do *not* copy your resume's content here. This is where you tell your **story**. It could be an anecdote about using the company's product, why you originally wanted to go into the field you are in, additional comments on some interesting projects you have worked on, or any number of things. Connect your experiences with what the job will entail. Show that you understand what the position entails (and you should know this, having done your research or conducted informational interviews with people in similar positions).

**Conclusion:** Make a final statement about your employability for the position. Thank them for reading your cover letter, and indicate your desire for an interview, giving them the best way to contact you. Remember, the cover letter can be a huge factor in distinguishing you from other candidates. If you have a generic cover letter, you will seem like a generic employee. Instead, be *outstanding*. Be interesting enough that anyone reading your cover letter will feel *compelled* to schedule an interview.

Sincerely,

(Your neatly handwritten signature here)

Your name typed

Enclosure (this *signifies* that other documents, such as a resume, are enclosed with the letter)



ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

### Sample 1: Cover Letter

235 Federal Street  
Chicago, IL 60600

October 26, 2012

Valerie Jones-Carpenter  
Editorial Director  
Red Ink Press  
234 South 35<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10000

Dear Ms. Jones-Carpenter,

You would not *believe* how excited I was to see Red Ink Press seeking to hire an Assistant Editor! Red Ink Press' publications were a staple in my home, having grown up in New York. The stories were entertaining, and my family always pored over the classifieds section, which was useful for replacing our microwave for a third time. Don't ask - I was a curious child, okay?

Times have changed since I was younger. The news has more of an online presence than ever. With this changing dynamic, you will need editors who can also embrace change. During my time as an Editor for *TechNews*, a weekly college newspaper, we had to adjust when we started publishing our articles online. Suddenly, we had to also work with web developers, and editors had to worry about how articles would appear online. There were discussions about interactive media for the online publication. This led to a dynamic environment, and I managed to work in a lot of roles as Editor for *TechNews*. I have no doubt this will be invaluable experience for working at Red Ink Press.

As shown in my enclosed resume, I have also written for several local publications as a freelance contributor. Some writing samples are enclosed, so you can see for yourself the quality of my work. Something you may find useful is my familiarity with the accounting industry, having worked part-time for a CPA while in college.

Thank you for reading, and I look forward to possibly having an interview with you! Please feel free to contact me at (312) 123-4567.

Respectfully,

Mike Vasquez

Enclosures



ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

## Sample 2: Cover Letter

15 Oak Street  
Chicago, IL 60614

June 15, 2012

Victor Reedman  
Technical Research Lead, Google Brain  
Google, Inc  
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway  
Mountain View, CA 94043  
United States

Dear Mr. Reedman:

When I close my eyes and think of the future, I see a world unabashedly driven by data. In many ways we are already on that path, and I want to be one of the individuals leading the march for a better world. Interning at Google Brain is a major step for me on that path, and I hope by the end of this letter you will be convinced that investing in me will be mutually beneficial.

Machine learning is one of my favorite tools to use. Ironically, one of my projects has been to work with the brain. I was a researcher using machine learning principles to guide treatment options for patients suffering from depression. We used Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) data along with different treatment results for the patients to train an algorithm that could make more informed decisions on the effectiveness of certain treatments for certain patients. Now we have a framework that predicts what treatments will work on particular patients with a success rate of 80%, whereas without our model, prescribed treatments have an average success rate of 40%. I can only imagine what kind of improvements we would have with more data - and is that not one of Google's missions? Using data to improve the world?

I am seeking to continue such healthcare-changing work with Google Brain. With Brain's resources and my experience and drive, there is much to be accomplished. It will not be easy, but we are the ones who determine the future of the world. Google is a leader in revolutionizing the world's path to data-driven services and Google Brain will doubtlessly revolutionize data science. Will you let me work with you to change the world?

If so, attached is my resume for you to peruse at your leisure. You can reach me at (312) 567-5555, or reach me by email at [efitzgerald@gmail.com](mailto:efitzgerald@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

Elsie Fitzgerald

Enclosure