A cover letter is an introduction to your resume. Though you do not always need a cover letter when you are presenting your resume in person, it is essential when you mail, email, or fax your resume to a prospective employer. You may find cover letters referred to as letters of application. When emailing your resume, the body of your email is the cover letter, with the resume attached.

The cover letter shows the employer your writing skills, which are important in any profession. It also allows you to highlight your skills and direct your interests more completely than is feasible with the resume.

The following pages will explain to you the rules and steps to cover letter writing. Examples of several different types of cover letters can also be found on the following pages.

**Cover Letters Should:**
1. Always be typed.
2. Always be included with a resume being mailed, faxed, or emailed.
3. Be individualized and addressed to a specific person whenever possible.
4. Use quality paper when mailing, preferably the same as your resume. White or cream is recommended.
5. Emphasize achievements, but if you make claims back them up.
6. Avoid the letter looking like a form letter and tailor it to fit a specific position.
7. Be brief and concise. Like your resume, the letter will be skimmed. Should be one page with three (3) to five (5) short paragraphs.

**COVER LETTER STEPS**

**Opening:** State why you are writing. Indicate the position and how you found out about it. Express some knowledge of the employer.

**Body:** Your chance to tell the employer why you are the best candidate for the position. Highlight your education and past achievements that qualify you for the position. Obviously it’s important that you research the company and the position so you know what sells. Be sure to connect the duties associated with the specific job you are applying to with your qualifications.

**Closing:** Time to re-emphasize your interests in the position and what your next step will be (e.g., “I will contact you next week…”). This is also the time to convey your appreciation for their time and consideration of you as a candidate for the position.

*It is important that your letter comes across as professional, yet with personality.*
COVER LETTER FORMATTING

1. Openings: Introduce yourself to the reader by telling them why you are writing. Identify the position you are seeking and the reason for your interest.

2. Body of the Letter: In one to three paragraphs provide evidence of key skills, experience, and personal traits that match the requirements of the position. This should NOT be a narrative version of your resume.

3. Closing: Indicate what you would like to have happen next. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.

Reference this sample below:

(Your Present Address)
(Date)

Mr. By Line
Top Magazine
100 Publishers Row
Atlanta, GA 12345

Dear Mr. Line:

Since childhood, I have been fascinated by the power of words. It is this passion which has led me to pursue a degree in English at Kennesaw State University, where I am now in my junior year. This linguistic love is also responsible for my interest in a future career in journalism, as well as my desire to become a summer intern at Top magazine.

I have a strong academic background in writing, editing, research, and literary analysis. One of my college courses focused exclusively on careers in writing, allowing me to further my skills in a variety of mediums including blogs, brochures, and memoirs. In addition to my coursework, I have interned at Peachtree Publishers where I have further developed my skills in editing by proof-reading manuscripts. While there I also became very proficient in all three major citation styles. I continue to develop my writing skills by working as a news reporter at my school's newspaper, “The Sentinel.”

As you will also note on my resume, I am also President of the Minority Student Association – a role that I am extremely proud to have been elected to. During my tenure as President, I took the initiative to draft a proposal calling for our organization to host a regional conference. Currently, I am working with the Chief Diversity Officer to make that a reality at our university. My determination and persistence combined with my writing abilities have resulted in this proposal being distributed to the President’s Council.

As a native Georgian, I would be honored to intern at such a prestigious local publication; as an aspiring editor, even more so. Your publication has a reputation of excellence, and my unique combination of knowledge, experience, and determination would undoubtedly make me an asset to your editorial department.

I look forward to the opportunity to speak with you further. You may reach me by phone at (404) 123-4567, or via email at nriter2@students.kennesaw.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nita Riter
(Your Present Address)
(Date)

Mr._______________________
Senior Vice President
Southern Company
Atlanta, GA 30070

Dear Mr._______________________:

A recent Wall Street Journal article quoted your description of your new “general associates” program for liberal arts graduates “from superior schools who have outstanding academic and leadership credentials.” I believe I am one of those students and would like to be considered for the program.

As you can see in my enclosed resume, I’ve held several management positions, most notably president of my 165-member sorority, a position that included managing a $20,000 budget as well as supervising six committees. I’ve also had extensive business experience, having financed 50 percent of my college education through a combination of work study and summer jobs.

You will also notice that I am an English major with a psychology minor. Through my English courses, I learned to both think clearly and communicate effectively, qualities prized by corporations such as Southern Company, but often missing in more narrowly-trained students. My psychology background helps me work with and supervise people effectively, traits that are so necessary in business today.

I will be in the Atlanta area the week of May 5-10 and would enjoy meeting with you to discuss how I might fit into your program. I believe that my immediate goal of entering a management-training program with a progressive Fortune 500 company matches your goal of hiring students with “high-quality academic and leadership experience.” I will call your office later this week to schedule an appointment.

Sincerely,

(Handwritten Signature)

(Type Your Name)

Enclosure: Resume
Your Present Address

Date

Ms.___________________
Manager, Professional Employment
Charter Medical Corporation
1 Main Street
Macon, GA 12346

Dear Ms.___________________:

At a recent meeting of the Regional Sales Association, I met James Smith, a Charter marketing representative, who suggested I contact you about employment possibilities in the south. Through my conversation with Mr. Smith and the article on Charter in the December issue of the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, I understand that you are expanding the southern territory into Tennessee and Alabama. Having attended school at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, I would welcome the chance to live in that area again.

My education and experience have prepared me well for a position as a sales representative. My degree program in professional sales included courses in consumer behavior, buying and selling, marketing management and sales promotion. Through these and other courses, I have developed strong skills in verbal and written communications as well as organizational and analytical abilities. During the past 3 years, I have chosen summer jobs that allowed me to test my interest in sales and marketing. At Macy’s, I had extensive contact with customers and enjoyed assisting them in merchandise selection. My work at UPS helped me realize that I can effectively handle a job that involves traveling and meeting a variety of people in different locations.

I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you during my spring break vacation (March 12-19), if that would be convenient. I can be reached by phone at (912) 555-9877 and would welcome the opportunity to set up a time to discuss a career with Charter Medical.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

(Handwritten signature)
(Type your name)

Enclosure: Resume
Jane Smith  
123 Main Street  
Detroit, MI 12456  
JSMITH@aol.com

August 12, 20__

(Name and Address of Employer)

Dear Ms.______________________:

I am applying for the Coordinator of Marketing position you recently advertised on the JobPlace listserv.

It appears that I would be a very good match for your coordinator position:

**Your Requirements**  
1-3 years experience in marketing  
Organizational experience  
Strong marketing skills  
Effective public speaking skills

**My Experience**  
Three years marketing experience  
Organized Trade Shows  
Produced marketing campaigns for current employer  
Graduate of the Toastmasters program

I also am a self-starter and have a strong level of commitment to my employers. Relocating will not be an obstacle, as my parents live in the area and would welcome my relocating.

I would very much appreciate an opportunity to speak with you concerning this position. Please feel free to contact me at (404) 555-6578 or email me at the above address.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Handwritten Signature)  
(Type Your Name)

Enclosure: Resume