

# Writing an Effective Cover Letter



- **Do your research first.** You will be better able to write an effective cover letter after you have researched the unit, hospital, and/or healthcare facility and determined why you want to work there.
- **Type each cover letter individually** and address it directly to the appropriate person using his/her title. If no name is given, call the facility and get the name of the Director of Human Resources or the Hiring Manager.
- Use action-oriented words similar to those in your resume to emphasize accomplishments. **Be sure to include some of the specific skills, qualifications, and duties listed in the job description.**
- Avoid starting many sentences with “I” or “My” as this misinterpreted as self-centeredness and lack of writing skills.

# Elements of the Cover Letter



## 1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph: Why you're interested.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph: How you're qualified as a clinician

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph: How you're qualified in other ways

## 4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph: What's Next

# 1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph: Why You're Interested

Note what position you applying for and what appeals to you about the hospital/facility and the position. Mention how you learned of the opening or the company/facility. This would also include naming any connections you may have within the organization.

- Specific Unit/Patient population
- Recent news/projects/initiatives
- Conversation with or referral from current employee
- Previous experience with the hospital/facility
- Mission Statement/Core Values
- Clinical/Research specialties

## Prompts:

Please accept my resume in application for the Registered Nurse position at Facility X. Through my clinical rotations and 2 years as a Certified Nurse Assistant, I can offer Facility X strong skills in.....

Through the UMass Boston MyCareer Online database, I learned that Facility X has a Registered Nurse opening in the XYZ Unit and I would like to apply for this position. I became particularly interested in Facility X's *focus on....**OR**....mission of provided services to...*

**Health E. Student**

100 Morrissey Blvd. | Boston, MA | 617-287-1000 | [healthe.student@umb.edu](mailto:healthe.student@umb.edu)

6/22/2016

**Ms. Stacey Henderson**

**Director, HR Operations**

University of Kansas Hospital

3901 Rainbow Blvd

Kansas City, KS 66160

Dear Ms. Henderson,

I am applying to the Nurse Residency program at the University of Kansas Hospital in the medical/telemetry progressive care units, surgical units, hematology/oncology/ BMT unit and acute care rotation. Particularly, I am interested in University of Kansas Hospital because of the emphasis on the care progression initiative. The daily interdisciplinary meetings are an exemplarily practice to make nurse's stronger patient advocates and improve overall quality safe patient care. Additionally, the University of Kansas Hospital's magnet recognition makes it an outstanding facility, which I would be an ideal environment to further develop my nursing skills.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph: How You're Qualified

**Explain why it is reasonable that you are pursuing the opportunity by relating pertinent information about your background. Tie your nursing experiences and skills directly to the job description and the qualifications of the position or the focus of the company.**

A simple strategy can be:

- Pick 1 or 2 nursing experiences that are most related to the position.
- Focus on results, accomplishments, and impact made (i.e. impact on patients, unit, processes/procedures, etc.)

### **Prompts:**

As a recent graduate Registered Nurse, I am interested in working for your facility to gain practical experience and additional knowledge *pertaining to my field of study...OR...to use the skills acquired from my clinical rotations in a professional environment.*

As a full-time student I effectively balanced my coursework, a part-time CNA position, and a leadership position in the Student Nurses Association. Managing these experiences has further developed my ability to juggle multiple tasks, manage my time, and maintain enthusiasm for any project I take on.

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During my varying clinical rotations, I rotated on a Dedication Education Unit (DEU) which provided the opportunity to work 1-1 with a clinical instructor on a telemetry medical and surgical unit and multiple opportunities to manage patient's care. One of these units specialized in cystic fibrosis patients with some in need of lung transplants, while on another I gained valuable experience in caring for face transplant and urology patients. My volunteer experience at a pediatric hematology/ oncology has helped me gain significant exposure to the importance of emotional supportive measures during nursing care and experience with immunocompromised patients.

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph:

## How You're Qualified in Other Ways

**Discuss how you can leverage complementary skill sets.**

- Leadership experience
  - Community involvement
  - Research experience
  - International experience
  - Previous work experience
- 
- ...or continue making a connection between your experience and the responsibilities listed in the job description.

### **Prompt:**

Through my experience conducting research for my senior capstone project and my Senior Honor's Thesis, I can offer strong knowledge base in the various *methods* of...**OR**...*approaches to delivering*...

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In addition to my nursing skills, I will bring to my next employer strong leadership skills and experiences with diverse cultures. Balancing course work while also being manager at a restaurant, serving as team leader on NCAA collegiate team, and volunteering as a Student Nurse Association Peer Mentor has required commitment, time management, and often, a well-regarded sense of humor. Preceptors, advisors, and supervisors have commented on my ability to manage multiple tasks while maintaining a level of enthusiasm for the project at hand. In addition to these leadership activities, my various cultural experiences abroad will be an asset. My involvement on a nursing and earthquake relief team in Nepal and a study abroad program in Tanzania have provided me with an appreciation, sensitivity, and overall awareness of diverse cultures which is imperative when working in a diverse metropolitan area such as Kansas City.



# 4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph: What's Next...

## **Conclude your Cover Letter by:**

- Thanking the reader for his/her time
- Noting your availability for an interview in order to discuss your interest and qualifications further
- Providing your contact information

## **Prompts:**

- I look forward to meeting with you to discuss opportunities at...
- If you require any additional information, please contact me at...
- I will contact you next week to discuss setting up an interview.
- Thank you for your consideration.

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Thank you for taking the time to review my application. I would welcome the chance to meet with you to discuss possible employment opportunities. I will be available for an interview at your convenience and may be reached at 617-287-1000, via email at [healthe.student@umb.edu](mailto:healthe.student@umb.edu). I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Health E. Student

# Cover Letter Self-Assessment Checklist

## HEADINGS AND SALUTATION

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| • Have you looked at a sample cover letters for ideas on style and content?      | Yes | No |
| • Does the header include your name, address, phone, and email?                  | Yes | No |
| • If the more1 page, do all pages include name/page # as a header/footer?        | Yes | No |
| • Does the header match the one on the resume/CV?                                | Yes | No |
| • If addressed to an individual, is the name & person's title spelled correctly? | Yes | No |

## BODY OF MESSAGE

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| • Does the letter indicate why you are writing (including what you are applying to?     | Yes | No |
| • Do you include information on how/where you heard of the open position?               | Yes | No |
| • Do you illustrate the match between your qualifications and the position duties?      | Yes | No |
| • Have you used keywords from the job ad within the letter as you describe your skills? | Yes | No |
| • Do you highlight some of the most relevant experiences listed in your resume/CV?      | Yes | No |
| • Do most statements include results and accomplishment's?                              | Yes | No |
| • Is it clear how you skills and abilities will help meet the organization's needs?     | Yes | No |
| • Do you close the letter with a clear message of "next steps"?                         | Yes | No |
| • Does the letter avoid repetitive phrasing?  | Yes | No |
| • Overall, does the letter "flow"; is it well-organized and interesting to read?        | Yes | No |

## FORMATTING

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| • Is the formatting consistent (dates, margins, fonts, etc.) and in a professional font and size? | Yes | No |
| • Is the letter free of errors and typos?   | Yes | No |
| • Have you name your cover letter file with your name and date?                                   | Yes | No |
| • Have you saved your resume as a PDF?  | Yes | No |