

# The Cover Letter

Your cover letter is your way of introducing yourself to a potential employer and elaborating on the experiences in your resume. Your goal is to get the employer to open your resume and offer you an interview. Make a good first impression!

## Suggested Online Resources:

Berkeley Guide to Resume and Letter Writing, p. 39

<https://career.berkeley.edu/Guide/ResumeLetterWriting.pdf>

Cover Letter Tips from Intern Match

<http://www.internmatch.com/guides/cover-letter-example-and-template>

## Procedures for Writing and Sending Cover Letters

See the “Directions” and “Sample Cover Letters” that follow.

After you are accepted into the B-CC Internship Program, start sending cover letters via email. Each time you send a cover letter, attach a resume and **CC Ms. Farrar** [Stacy\\_K\\_Farrar@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Stacy_K_Farrar@mcpsmd.org)

Check your email daily for a response. When you get a response, respond quickly.

- If they offer you an interview and you are interested, write back thanking them and confirming the time and place.
- If you are unable to interview at the time offered, write back thanking them and suggesting alternate specific times. For example, you might say “Thank you for offering to interview me for an internship. I am interested in the position, but have class in the morning. I am available Thursday or Friday after 2:30. Would either of those times work?”
- If offered an interview, you should almost always go. It may not have been a place you thought about, but you might be surprised at how much you like it. If you have already accepted a position, thank them for the offer and say that you’ve accepted another position.

## Follow up

The job search process is difficult and it’s easy to get discouraged. Instead of giving up, take action!

- If someone doesn’t respond to your email within ten days, send another, or call or stop by (if appropriate). Be polite.
- If someone meets with you and says no, ask for additional ideas/suggestions. Pursue those and any other leads you have.
- This is hard work. Stick with it!

## Directions for Cover Letter

### Salutation/Greeting

- Keep it formal (“Dear Mr. Jones,”)
- Use a name whenever possible – do your best to locate one. If you are unable to find a name, use a generic greeting such as “To whom it may concern:” or “Dear Hiring Manager:”

### Paragraph One

- Identify the reason for writing (to apply for or inquire about a specific job or an internship).
- Identify yourself by one or more descriptors such as degree, experience, or school. (I am a rising senior at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School...)”)
- Indicate where, when, and how you learned about the job. Mention the name of the person who told you about the job, especially if s/he is well-respected, knows the person, or is interning there. (My teacher, Ms. Brown, mentioned that you may be looking for an intern.)
- Indicate in summary form that you have the qualifications to do the job and/or that you can add value to the organization.

### Paragraph 2

- Convince the reader by providing factual evidence to support your qualifications. Demonstrate that you will be an asset to the company. Do NOT discuss what the company will do for you.
- Give a concise overview of your work history/volunteer experience/extracurricular accomplishments in relation to the job requirements.
- Provide concrete examples of job-related accomplishments or results obtained through work, school, extracurricular activities or volunteer service (ex: “I was named employee of the month for my customer service skills.” NOT “I am great with customers.”)

### Paragraph 3

- Invite the reader to take action, e.g. request an interview.
- Express confidence in your abilities (If given the opportunity, I am confident I can...” NOT “Hopefully, I will have what it takes to be successful...”)
- Thank the reader for considering your request.

### Closing

- Skip a line and write a formal closing such as "Sincerely" or "Sincerely Yours"
- Skip a space and “sign” your name in a *cursive font*. Skip another space and type your name.

### Formatting and other guidelines

- Use a standard font that looks professional, such as Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial or Palatino.
- Single-space your cover letter. Leave a space between each paragraph. Left-justify.
- Avoid jargon, slang, and trite phrases. (Do NOT use “so,” “very” and “really.”)
- Express enthusiasm and energy while being warm, professional and positive. (Don’t overdo it.)
- Be sure the subject line of the email is appropriate. For example, you might write “Potential Internship for B-CC Student.” Do NOT write “Hi, this is...”)
- Make sure your email address is a professional one. ([wildthing@aol.com](mailto:wildthing@aol.com) is NOT professional.)
- Attach a copy of your resume.

## Sample Cover Letters

### Sample letter sent via email to a new sponsor:

(Attach a copy of resume and cc Ms. Farrar [Stacy K Farrar@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Stacy_K_Farrar@mcpsmd.org))

After you are accepted, send at any time -- the sooner the better!

Dear Mrs. Morris,

I am a junior at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. My neighbor, Jill Jackson, told me that the National Gallery is looking for an intern. I am writing to express my interest in that position. As a lifetime supporter of the arts and an organized person, I am confident that I can assist the development team in working with members of The Circle to ensure the possibility of future exhibitions.

Through my work experience with Hooks Book Events and Joyful Bath Co., I've developed interpersonal skills that will enable me to effectively communicate with the donors. My expertise in mailings, as well as social media, will allow me to manage requests for information from current members efficiently, and even contact prospective donors. In addition, working behind the scenes in retail has reinforced the importance of quality control to produce the best possible product. This knowledge directly applies to day-to-day work in the development office, as it is vital that each piece of literature sent out meets the standards of the Gallery.

Serving as Copy Editor of my high school's yearbook and Recording Secretary of the senior class has given me additional experience in leadership. My ability to coordinate details and execute plans in a school environment will make certain that all Gallery records are updated in a timely manner and donor events run smoothly.

I have attached a copy of my resume and would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Katie Oaks*

Katie Oaks

**Sample letters sent via email to sponsor who has had a B-CC student intern:**

(Attach a copy of resume and cc **Ms. Farrar Stacy\_K\_Farrar@mcpsmd.org**)

Wait until after the job fair for further instructions.

Dear Ms. Simmons,

I am interested in interviewing for a position as an intern in the Vertical Files at the National Gallery of Art. I am a junior at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School and learned about the position from the internship coordinator, Ms. Farrar. In addition, John Smith, who is currently interning there, mentioned that he has acquired a great deal of practical experience working with you. I feel my organizational skills and aptitude in assisting others would help me to excel in an internship at the Vertical Files.

As you can see from my attached resume, I have had several experiences that have prepared me to work at the library. For instance, at the Chevy Chase Library, I guided children through the summer reading program, which took both organizational skills and good customer relations. I also worked at the B-CC book sale, where I had to multitask. I labeled boxes, sorted books, managed the organizational system, and helped customers at the same time.

I am confident that my organizational and customer service skills would make me a valuable asset at the Vertical Files. Thank you for taking the time to consider my application; I look forward to hearing from you soon regarding an interview.

Sincerely,

*Jenny Jones*

Jenny Jones

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**For a Research Position**

Dear Dr. Breedlove,

I am writing to express my interest in interning at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). Nancy Chang noticed my passion for neurobiological research and she recommended that I pursue an internship at the NINDS. My enthusiasm and laboratory skills will enable me to assist your research team and the work of the Neurophysiological Pharmacology Section of the NINDS as a whole.

Currently, I hold a 4.0 GPA at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, and finished the semester with a 96% in AP Biology and a 96% in AP Psychology. My studies included extensive units on the mammalian nervous system and all major neurotransmitters. I have further studied and am particularly interested in the effects of neurotransmitters on basal ganglia system function and

dysfunction. I believe that my my skills and experience will help further your research in movement disorders.

In my lab-based classes, I have gained valuable expertise in using all objective lenses of a microscope and in the use of a micropipette. My acquired talents in these areas along with my ability to learn new skills quickly will enable me to perform all laboratory operations with accuracy and precision.

It would be my honor to have the opportunity to come in and speak with you personally. I have also submitted my application to the NIH Summer Internship Program in Biomedical Research (SIP), and as such I can intern at the NINDS during the summer as well as continuing into the academic school year. Please feel free to contact me with any questions by phone at (###)-###-#### or by email at yourname@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

*Harry*

Harry Chaudry

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### **For a Medical Observership**

Dear Dr. Delacroix,

I am writing to apply for a position in your high school observership program for the upcoming school year. I am a junior at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School and learned about this opportunity through my teacher, Ms. Farrar and my classmate, Spiro Kantel. I plan to pursue a career in medicine and based on Spiro's description of his experience, I am especially interested in shadowing the cardiothoracic surgery team. My interest in medicine, the courses I've taken, and the experiences I've had qualify me for this position.

I am currently studying, and excel at, Anatomy and Physiology and Advanced Placement Biology. I am interested in how the human body functions and how best to heal, repair, and care for it. Recently I had the opportunity to observe two open heart surgeries in person in the operating room. Seeing these procedures was an incredible experience that opened my eyes to the field of surgery and reinforced my desire to study medicine.

I am highly motivated, energetic, personable, helpful, and inquisitive. I am confident that my interest, abilities, and personality will make me an excellent choice for this observership. Thank you for taking the time to consider my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

*Sofia*

Sofia Olsen

Sample letter sent via email to confirm **when you secure a position:**  
(CC Ms. Farrar Stacy\_K\_Farrar@mcpsmd.org)

Send ASAP

Dear Mr. Alako,

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me about PetPop last week. I love animals and am excited about interning with you next year. As I mentioned, the internship will start in September and continue through May. I will need to work approximately ten hours per week. Here is a link to the B-CC website, which has additional information about the internship program at B-CC: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bcchs/academics/internships/index.aspx#whatisexpected>

I have cc'd our internship coordinator, Ms. Stacy Farrar. She would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the program. I will be in touch soon regarding the required paperwork.

Thanks again. I look forward to working with you.

Regards,

*Billy*

Billy Jones