COVER LETTER GUIDE

Georgia Tech
Career Center

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This guide will help you understand what cover letters are, when to use them, and how to write your own.



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RESUME VS. COVER LETTER

Understand the key differences between cover letters and resumes. Cover letters and resumes are core components of a job application, but they have different purposes and distinct formats. **Here are the main distinctions:**

Cover Letters	Resumes
Introduce yourself and highlight your relevant qualifications in well- structured paragraphs	Present a concise summary of your relevant experiences and skills using bullet points.
Highlight two or three examples of your prior experiences to demonstrate why you're an ideal candidate.	Provide more detailed, measurable achievements of your educational and relevant experience.
Exhibit your genuine interest and understanding of the specific position and/or company.	Incorporate keywords from the job description to demonstrate your fit for the role.
One full page in length. Limit your cover letter length to 4 paragraphs	1 – 2 pages in length based on your relevant experience
Can serve as a writing sample, showcasing your communication skills	Key to making it easy for employers to scan and quickly identify your relevant qualifications

COVER LETTERS

Crafting an Effective Cover Letter

With many employment positions, you may be asked to submit a cover letter or letter of interest. A cover letter is an introduction to your resume and details your qualifications for a particular position or role. Cover letters are written specifically to each individual job posting, using the key skills the job posting is looking for. We recommend submitting one even if it is optional.

When properly written, the letter can help the reader navigate and highlight important items on your resume. This is your opportunity to clearly convey in words how your personal experiences connect to a specific position. This is your time to shine! This section will explain the purpose of a cover letter, best suggestions for content and formatting, and a sample document to display all components together.



Tips & Highlights

There is no singular cover letter for every single position.

Cover letters are typically one page or less (unless otherwise specified by the employer).

Your cover letter should not mirror resume content; Cover letters are meant to add depth to their understanding of why you qualify or are a good fit for the position.

Clearly connect your experiences to the skills required for the position



Defined:

A one-page (or less) letter to:

- Market your skills, abilities, and experiences
- Accompany your resume and provide more detail
- Relate to the job to which you are applying

The Purpose:

1. **Introduce you to an employer**
2. **Give context for how you found the job**
3. **Highlight a few of your skills and experiences that make you a competitive candidate**

NOTES:

A cover letter is a highlight reel - it should be brief, but informative.

Be sure to customize a cover letter for each job you apply to, referring to the job description as a guide for what content to include.

When do I use it?

- **Job posting requirement**
- **Networking/Conveying interest**

When do I NOT use it?

- **Career Fairs**

Header & Salutation

Within your header, your contact information you list on your cover letter should be same as your resume. The date listed on your cover should be the date that you are submitting the cover letter. Make your best effort to include the hiring manager's title if possible (e.g., Director of Human Resources). Always include the company's physical address in the header of your cover letter. Refer to the reader/hiring manager by their full name if able, but if not, use "Dear Hiring Manager:"

Tips & Highlights

Cover letters are typically one page or less (unless otherwise specified by the employer).

You will have a different cover letter for each job you apply for.

If possible, address the hiring manager by name in your header.

Clearly connect your experiences to the skills required for the position.

Header Example

Buzz Tech
(404) 555-1885 | gglobal@gatech.edu | Atlanta, GA 30332
linkedin.com/in/garyglobal

August 23, 2022

First and Last Name
Position Title
Company Name
0000 Peachtree Dunwoody Rd Atlanta, GA 30328

Greetings First and Last Name,



Opening & Introductory Paragraph

It is important that you craft an opening paragraph that will hook your reader's attention. Your opening paragraph will set the stage for the rest of the cover letter include the "why" for your application and why you want this specific job at this company. You should open the letter with a statement of why you are writing. Opening tells what the job title you're applying for is and where you found it. The introductory paragraph will contain 3-5 skills you possess that the company seeks in a new hire and shows attention to exact requirements.

Introductory Paragraph Example

"I am writing to express my interest in your computer technician posting located on your employment opportunities website. With my class project work on building a computer, hardwiring, and [SKILL 3] skills, I can serve as a contributing team member at [COMPANY] well."



Body Paragraphs

The body paragraphs are where you do your best—and hardest—work by showing the recruiter the details of your three qualifications, when and where you acquired them, and some of the results. Begin by careful analysis of your three selected qualifications and explain where they originated and how you have used them. "Show" your reader how you have implemented any attained knowledge, how you have been focused, dedicated, attuned to good work and marketability. Quantify with numbers, facts, statistics, and end results of your assignment or project. Now is not the time for false modesty. Provide hard details, and good nouns and verbs.

Body Paragraph Example

"During my time working at the IT Desk at Georgia Tech, I have been able to expand on my problem- solving, troubleshooting, and computer network skills. Assisting clients with troubleshooting technical problems and connection issues, I assist an average of 5 customers an hour. Most recently I received the employee of the month for my accomplishments. I understand that having knowledge of various, common technical issues is essential to success to this position and I am confident in my abilities to excel in this task and the position overall."



Conclusion & Wrapping Up

You've successfully outlined your abilities as it relates to the role, yay! Now that you are here, it is important to end the letter on a positive note to reiterate the skills you have previously outlined in your letter. If there is something unique about the company you are applying to become a part of that you can relate to, really like, etc., add it! Once you feel you have touched on all that you can, thank the reader for their time and invite the reader to contact you.

Concluding Paragraph Example

"It would be an honor to join the _____ team to assist in adding value to the initiatives and goals that you have. I am self-assured I can positively contribute to the organization and contribute to enhancing the _____ experience for all. I have attached my resume for review. Please feel free to contact me via phone or email to discuss how my computer network project experience, application knowledge, and communication abilities can serve you at _____."

EXAMPLE COVER LETTERS

Example Cover Letter Outline

NOTE: THESE ARE SAMPLE COVER LETTERS. THEY INCLUDES POSSIBILITIES AND AREAS THAT WILL CHANGE BASED ON NEEDS. DO NOT USE OR COPY VERBATIM.

FirstName LastName
City, State Zip (optional) | Phone Number | Email | LinkedIn

Date

Name of Employer/Hiring Manager
Title of Employer's Position
Name of Company/Organization
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name or Dear Hiring Managers with Name of Company,

1st Section: "Why Am I Writing?" Identify the position you are applying for or the career interest area you are inquiring about. Identify where/how you heard of the opening or organization. Research the company and discuss why you are interested in working for that organization. It is imperative to demonstrate you are writing this cover letter specifically for this company.

2nd Section (1 to 2 Paragraphs Recommended): "Who Am I and Why Should You Hire Me?" Identify your skills, experiences, and qualities that relate to the position (or interest area.) Highlight one or two of your strongest qualifications and explain how they relate to the needs of the employer. Do not simply state the facts that are on your résumé. ("Through my public relations internship at WWOW, I have developed sales and communication skills that are essential to the position of X," sounds more informative than, "I have worked in public relations as an intern.") Explain why you are specifically interested in the employer and the type of work or location, etc.

3rd Section: "My Next Step." Refer the reader to the enclosed application, résumé, vitae, and/or status of other required documents. Close the letter with a strong interest in pursuing the next step of an employment interview, informational interview, and/or additional information or application. Thank the employer for their time and let them know you hope to hear from them soon. Clearly indicate whether you or the employer will follow up and what the next step will be.

Sincerely,

Handwritten and/or Your Online Signature Typed Name

SAMPLE FULL-TIME COVER LETTER. DO NOT USE OR COPY VERBATIM.

GEORGE BURDELL
Atlanta, Georgia · 444.888.9999 · geo.burdell@gatech.edu

Sara Heartland, Recruiter
Universal Equity Partners
S.heartlan@Uni.com

Dear Mx. Heartland,

The position description listed on the Georgia Tech CareerBuzz site for your 2022 Private Equity Analyst Program caught my immediate attention. As a rising fourth year graduating May 2022, with a bachelor of science in economics I am seeking a full-time opportunity to enhance and practice equity deal-making and portfolio management skills in an immersive program. Here at Georgia Tech I have been active in the Foundation Investment initiative, as well as having experienced an internship with MT Associates. My portfolio modeling, forecasting and strong communications skills make me a strong candidate for the Universal program.

While interning with MT Associates I had the opportunity to shadow consultants as they called on major clients, then participating in modeling portfolios based on client growth specifications. As an economics major my analytical and software skills are targeted to understandings of the financial and investment markets. This fall term I will begin a senior project to explore emerging markets specifically related to green and climate issues, a growing concern worldwide.

Attached is my resume for your review. It demonstrates my academic achievements and engagement in various student investment initiatives on campus. Throughout my years at Georgia Tech I have successfully participated in group projects in leadership and support roles, as well as executing individual projects, all with strong problem-solving and analytical skills. Presentations and teaching/tutoring experiences have strengthened my communication abilities.

I look forward to speaking with you or an associate regarding the 2022 Private Equity Analyst Program of Universal Equity Partners. From the description it sounds as if it is the professional step I seek upon graduation from Georgia Tech and my skills will contribute to the growth of Universal Equity Partners. I can be contacted at 444.888.9999 or geo.burdell@gatech.edu and look forward to the opportunity.

Sincerely,

George Burdell

SAMPLE CO-OP COVER LETTER. DO NOT USE OR COPY VERBATIM.

GRACE MARSHALL
Atlanta, GA 30325 | 678.888.4444 | g.marshall23@gatech.edu
www.LinkedIn.com/in/Grace_Marshall

September 15, 2021

Human Resources
Honeywell
7901 Innovation Way
Mason, Ohio 45040

RE: JOB ID: req283476
Category: Engineering

Dear Human Resources staff member:

The co-op posting for Honeywell's Intelligrated Product Development attracted my attention on CareerBuzz, and my current resume is attached for consideration for Job ID: req283476. Through several opportunities at Georgia Tech I have worked on cross-functional teams and relish learning from other disciplines in the process of product design and development. Data analysis is a recent area of focus where my skills would support the team effort. CAD and Microsoft Office are additional strengths.

As a member of an industrial design multidisciplinary class project I collaborated with students from four majors to create a 3-D printed prototype for an innovative solution in disabilities services to the legally blind. We designed and developed a speech recognition transcription process for taking notes in Braille.

In a recent data analytics courses my team created a user-friendly dashboard to complement logistics data collection to more efficiently redirect scarce equipment resources. I was a key player in collecting and analyzing the initial data.

Since a high school class in industrial design I have been a CAD user, creating and interpreting 3-D designs and projects ranging from study cubbies to machining replacement parts for tools.
As a rising junior I anticipate graduation from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Spring 2023 with a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering with a product design concentration.

I can be reached at 678.888.4444 or l.marshall23@gatech.edu and look forward to speaking with you about the product development co-op at your Mason location.

Sincerely,

Grace Marshall

SAMPLE MASTERS OF SCIENCES COVER LETTER. DO NOT USE OR COPY VERBATIM.

GINGER JONES
Atlanta, GA | 555-555-5555 | ginger.jones@gatech.edu | www.linkedin.com/in/gingerjones

5/25/2021

Asia Lawson
Director
Name of Company/Organization Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Asia Lawson,

I am excited to apply for the role of Associate Scientist. I will be obtaining a Master of Science in Biology from the Georgia Institute of Technology this Spring and believe that Lab Novu would be a wonderful company to begin my full-time career. My strong experimental background, and excellent communication skills make me a highly qualified candidate for this position.

As a previous intern at Pinnacle Pharma, I assisted with developing synthetic sequences, assessing and advancing novel proteins, and recording enzymatic performances. Currently, as a research assistant at the Collins lab at Georgia Tech, I am gaining more protein and gene editing experience, which I noted was a key component you are seeking in an ideal candidate. Although I pride myself on my technical skills, I recognize the importance of conveying the value of my work to others. My strong written communication skills helped me to contribute to two published scientific papers. I also have experience explaining my work to non-expert audiences as evidenced by my work as a Genetics Teaching Assistant and participation in the Three Minute Thesis competition. I believe this will help me succeed as a member of your cross-functional team.

Lab Novu is a pioneer in the protein therapeutic Biotech industry, and I would like to contribute to your important work. Please let me know if I can answer any questions or provide additional information. I'm looking forward to learning more details about the Associate Scientist position and the Lab Novu corporate family as a whole.

Sincerely,

Ginger Jones

SAMPLE MS CANDIDATE APPLYING FOR A SR. ANALYST CONSULTANT POSITION. DO NOT USE OR COPY VERBATIM.

GEORGIA JACKET
Seattle, WA • gt.jacket@gatech.edu • 123-456-7890 • linkedin.com/in/gtjacket

October 10, 2023

Terry BuzzYellow
Senior Recruiter
Salesforce Inc.
415 Mission Street, 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Ms. BuzzYellow,

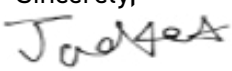
As a seasoned professional with industry experience and a passion for analytics, I am excited to apply for the Senior Analyst Consultant position at Salesforce. I learned about the opportunity via Chris Bernal, a current Data Manager at Salesforce. Currently pursuing a Master's degree in Computer Science at Georgia Tech, I am eager to leverage my real-world experience in client engagement and a strong background in data analysis using advanced quantitative methods at Georgia Tech to deliver customer-focused data solutions to address complex business challenges.

During my tenure as a Client Engagement Consultant at XYZ Consulting, I led various projects with a wide array of organizations (e.g., government, nonprofits) facing challenges maintaining strong relationships with their clients. I acted as the core point of contact to collaborate with internal teams to develop solutions, products, or services that align with their clients' requirements and needs. For example, I successfully led a project for a nonprofit focused on environmental conservation. By implementing personalized donor engagement strategies and customized relationship management software, my team achieved a 25% increase in donor retention and a 15% boost in funding for their crucial initiatives within the first six months. Also, my ability to craft compelling stories has allowed me to deliver impactful presentations and reports to clients, driving data-driven decision-making. I believe my problem-solving skills and impactful insights, with a proven record of project success, allow me to deliver data-driven solutions.

In addition to my first-hand consulting experience, as I pursue my online Master's degree at GT, I have been continuously expanding my technical skills in data analysis, software engineering, and quantitative methodologies, making me well-equipped to manage large-scale datasets, predict scenarios, and prescribe actions for business growth and improvement. In particular, I have completed several academic projects using quantitative modeling from design to implementation with various types of algorithms, such as Decision Trees and Clustering Algorithms. I am confident that my quantitative data analytic skills will enable me to leverage the power of data to empower clients to transform their businesses.

The prospect of joining Salesforce excites me, as I firmly believe that my 4+ years of consulting experience, along with strong data analytic skills, will make me a valuable asset to your team. Additionally, the option to telecommute and the opportunity for occasional travel align perfectly with my dedication to delivering results while maintaining a flexible and collaborative work style. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration, and I eagerly look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Georgia Jacket

***PHD CANDIDATE APPLYING FOR A DATA SCIENTIST POSITION.*
*DO NOT USE OR COPY VERBATIM.***

YUCHEN BUZZ
12 GT Ave, Atlanta, GA • yu.buzz@gatech.edu • 123-456-7890 • linkedin.com/in/yubuzzgt

September 15, 2023

Abbott Laboratories
240 Spring St NW
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am excited to apply for the Data Scientist position at Abbott, which I found through Georgia Tech CareerBuzz. I am a Ph.D. Candidate in Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech (GT) and expect to graduate in May 2024. Based on my extensive research experience conducting biomedical data analysis and my ability to communicate materials to different audiences, I believe that I am qualified for the Data Scientist position to lead and conduct translational research to create breakthrough science to improve people's health.

For 4+ years at GT, I have engaged in extensive research both within academia and beyond, accomplishing numerous successful research projects through the application of innovative computational and statistical approaches. For example, I led biomedical data mining and analysis during a collaborative venture with GE Healthcare in 2022. As the Lead Researcher, I applied diverse experimental and computational techniques, encompassing machine learning algorithms, data visualization methodologies, and sophisticated statistical models, which offered applicable insights to GE's ongoing medical device product development. Given my hands-on research expertise, I am confident that my first-hand research experience can contribute to developing, evaluating, and applying novel scientific methods for medical device development efforts at Abbott.

Beyond my accomplishments in research, my extensive 3+ years of teaching and public speaking experience showcase my ability to effectively convey scientific findings and concepts to diverse stakeholders at Abbott. For instance, when I taught a Biomedical Informatics and Modeling course at GT, I broke down complex topics using relatable real-world examples, making the material accessible and engaging for all students. I received a departmental teaching award in 2021 in recognition of my exceptional communication skills. I believe my ability to articulate technical and scientific insights clearly and concisely to non-technical audiences allows me to effectively collaborate with diverse teams at Abbott.

I am thrilled about the opportunity to contribute my analytical skills and research experience to collaborative projects while leveraging my audience-centered communication abilities at Abbott. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need anything from me. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I look forward to learning more about the role and speaking with you in the near future.

Sincerely,



Yuchen Buzz

COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

Have you done all of the following as you have written your cover letter?:

- [ ] Do you have the correct employer information listed?
- [ ] Is your letter error-free?
- [ ] Are you truly interested in the position you are applying for?
- [ ] Do you know why you are applying for the position?
- [ ] Have you identified your related experiences and skills and how they connect to the position?
- [ ] How can you contribute to the role, organization/company, etc.?
- [ ] Did you close out your cover letter appropriately?
- [ ] What are your next steps for follow-up if needed?

Answering each of these questions honestly will better help you in writing an effective cover letter and can increase your chances of an interview.

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