COVER LETTER GUIDE

PURPOSE:
A cover letter is a business letter that accompanies each resume you send to a prospective employer. The cover letter serves as an introduction; it tells an employer who you are and why you are sending them your resume. The cover letter should complement, not duplicate your resume. Its purpose is to interpret the data-oriented, factual resume and add a personal touch. There are a variety of styles to use when writing cover letter. We have included examples of styles that second year students have used throughout the years.

WRITING EFFECTIVE COVER LETTERS:
Cover letters should answer the all-important question: Why should we hire you? Your cover letter may make the difference between obtaining a job interview and having your resume ignored, so it makes good sense to devote the necessary time and effort to writing effective cover letters.

Use your cover letter to target individual jobs and organizations. You must do some research before writing the cover letter to be able to customize your letter to meet the needs of the prospective employer. Do not just repeat what is said on your resume. Instead, explain the reasons for your interest in the specific organization, any career transitions that you’ve made or intend to make, and identify your most relevant skills or experiences. The tone of the letter should express a high level of interest and emphasize the way in which you can fulfill the company’s need.

COVER LETTER DO'S:
- Keep paragraphs relatively short so they are easy to read quickly.
- Check your spelling and grammar and proofread it over and over again. Also have someone else proofread it. If you say that you are detail oriented and have typos in the cover letter, your resume will not be considered.
- Individualize each letter – a cover letter is where you can put your company research to good use and answer the question why this company!
- Try to use an active voice and take ownership for your accomplishments, but attempt to refrain from starting every sentence with "I".
- Retain copies of all letters you send, as these can be valuable for future action.
- Mention people with whom you have made good a networking connection. Make sure that you get the person’s approval before using their name.
- **Triple check** each letter for mistakes and typos!
COVER LETTER DON’TS:
• Don’t use trite language or turn your cover letter into an autobiography.
• Don’t address your letter “Dear Sir or Madam” or “To Whom It May Concern”; find out who will be receiving the applications or resumes.
• Don’t send mass-produced cover letters.
• Don’t use special effects; keep it professional. A standard font (Arial or Times Roman, 11 or 12 point size) is appropriate.

SUGGESTED SAMPLE COVER LETTER FORMAT:
The template below provides a framework for writing your own individual cover letters. Sample cover letters from former students follow to provide examples.

***************************************************************
Your name
Street address
City, State Zip code

Current Date

Contact person
Employer name
Street address
City, State Zip code

Dear Mr. or Ms. Contact:

The first paragraph should be used to attract attention and to identify yourself. Tell the employer why you are writing, name the position for which you are applying.
(If applicable, mention a name of a person you have spoken with at the firm and how that heightened your interest. Alternatively, mention if you attended a company event and how it heightened your interest – e.g. Corporate presentation or a site visit)

The second paragraph should emphasize your qualifications and accomplishments. Amplify specific points in your resume, that you feel are your strengths and would be of particular interest to this employer. Why should the employer consider your application? What skills, etc. can you bring to the position? State why you are interested in working for this employer and specify your interest in this type of work. Establish any logical connection between you and the employer. Refer to your resume to illustrate your training, interest and experience, but do not simply repeat your resume.

The third paragraph should pave the way for the next contact. Include an explicit request for an interview and thank them for their time

Sincerely,
Your Typewritten Name
Dear Ms. Sawyer,

I am a first-year MBA student at the New York University’s Stern School of Business, majoring in finance and accounting, and I am writing to submit my application for an Investment Banking Summer Associate position in the New York office.

My professional experience has provided me with the skill set needed for an Investment Banking career at Morgan Stanley. As a consultant for McKinsey & Co., I devised the M&A strategy of an Italian bank, preparing valuations and presentations for its board. As a consultant for Bain & Co., I developed due diligences for acquisition targets of private equity funds. I am confident that the knowledge acquired from these experiences coupled with my interpersonal skills and my commitment and dedication would make me a successful contributor to Morgan Stanley.

Through the corporate presentation and the informational interview I have had the opportunity to learn more about Morgan Stanley. It is my intention to join a firm that has one of the greatest portfolios of past deals and client relationships. Additionally your firm’s business model of delivering high value-added products is facilitated by a diverse and team-oriented environment where brilliant people work at their best. For these reasons I am strongly interested in participating in the future growth of Morgan Stanley.

Sincerely,

Student Name
Dear Ms. Lehman:

I am a first year MBA student at the Leonard N. Stern School of Business, and I am interested in pursuing a Summer Associate position with Booz Allen Hamilton. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to interview with your team when you begin the recruiting process in January.

The success of Booz Allen Hamilton depends on both the relationships that are built with the clients and the team’s ability to execute on assignments that effectively meet the clients’ objectives. By exposing its consultants to a wide array of complex business issues, Booz Allen Hamilton creates an environment that enables each team to most effectively cater to its clients. My experiences would enable me to positively contribute to the team and its client service goals.

Throughout my career, I have analyzed the impact of strategic business decisions and advised clients on improving their process of making those decisions by building strong relationships. As a Consulting Manager with Strata Decision Technology, I led executive teams through the successful implementation of tools to improve their organizations’ strategic planning and capital budgeting processes. Prior to Strata, I developed extensive analytical insight with PricewaterhouseCoopers, where I built detailed financial models to determine the viability of reorganization plans for distressed companies. These experiences, combined with my coursework at Stern would make me a great asset at Booz Allen Hamilton.

Thank you for considering my application, and I look forward to the next steps of the recruiting process.

Regards,

Student Name
Dear Ms. Hennessey:

Please consider this an application for your Treasury Internship position. I am a University of Washington alumnus and first-year MBA student at NYU’s Stern School of Business, with an emphasis in corporate finance.

Intel, with its dominance in computing technologies and commitment to innovation, is well positioned to continue leading the technology industry. In turn, I believe that my professional experiences, passion for technology, and current MBA studies at Stern position me as a strong candidate for a leadership role at Intel.

I have over five years investment banking experience as a securities analyst, publishing investment research on the technology and communications industries, including enterprise software vendors such as PeopleSoft and i2 Technologies, as well as Internet-based enterprises such as Yahoo and eBay. As noted in my resume, my duties required extensive analytical and interpersonal skills. I interacted with executive management teams of large public companies on a weekly basis to discern nuances of their strategy and financial performance. I created integrated financial and valuation models, and published comprehensive reports of up to 50 pages in length for distribution to the investment community. In addition, I regularly presented research findings to the institutional sales team, as well as fielded calls from portfolio managers such as Peter Lynch to influence their asset management decisions.

I have enclosed my resume for your review. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to meeting with you and your associates in the near future.

Sincerely,

Student Name
MBA Candidate, NYU Stern Class of 2008
I am a first year, full-time MBA student at New York University’s Leonard N. Stern School of Business. I would like to be considered for a position on your closed interview schedule for the Sales and Trading Summer Associate Program.

My work experience and academic coursework have provided me with the skills necessary for a position in Sales and Trading. As a Marine Corps Officer Recruiter, I received extensive sales training and developed solid interpersonal skills. This experience, combined with the attributes developed in military aviation at Annapolis such as teamwork, discipline, tenacity and the ability to make sound decisions quickly, will provide a firm foundation upon which I can contribute to the Citigroup team.

I eagerly await the opportunity to interview for a Summer Associate position. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Student Name
September 21, 2007

xxxx
xxxx
xxxx

Dear Ms xxxx,

I am a second year MBA student at New York University’s Leonard N. Stern School of Business. I am sincerely interested in the summer XXXX Program at XXXX.

Prior to business school, I was a consultant at XXXXX and XXXXX. My experience includes:

- **Analyzing new accounting norms** introduced by the Government and communicating their impact to clients
- **Analyzing financial statements** of multinational organizations to **prepare tax returns**
- **Evaluating companies** using **benchmarking techniques** and other **performance measurement tools**
- **Analyzing quantitative data** and **developing models** to make recommendations to senior management teams
- **Providing strategic advice** and **preparing business plans** for clients

A Bachelor’s degree in Financial Accounting, Cost Analysis and Economics and a Master’s degree in Financial Management and Management Accounting have given me a sound quantitative background.

In order to understand the program better, I had detailed conversations with xxxx (associate in the program). Based on my previous experiences and conversations with associates, I am confident that I can contribute successfully to the XXXX.

I thank you for your time and hope you to consider me for a position on your interview invitation list.

Sincerely,

XXXXXX