## Cover Letter Workshop



Brought to you in cooperation with the Purdue Online Writing Lab



- Cover Letter Basics
- Preliminary Research
- Header
- First Paragraph
- Middle
- Conclusion
- Language
- Extra Tips

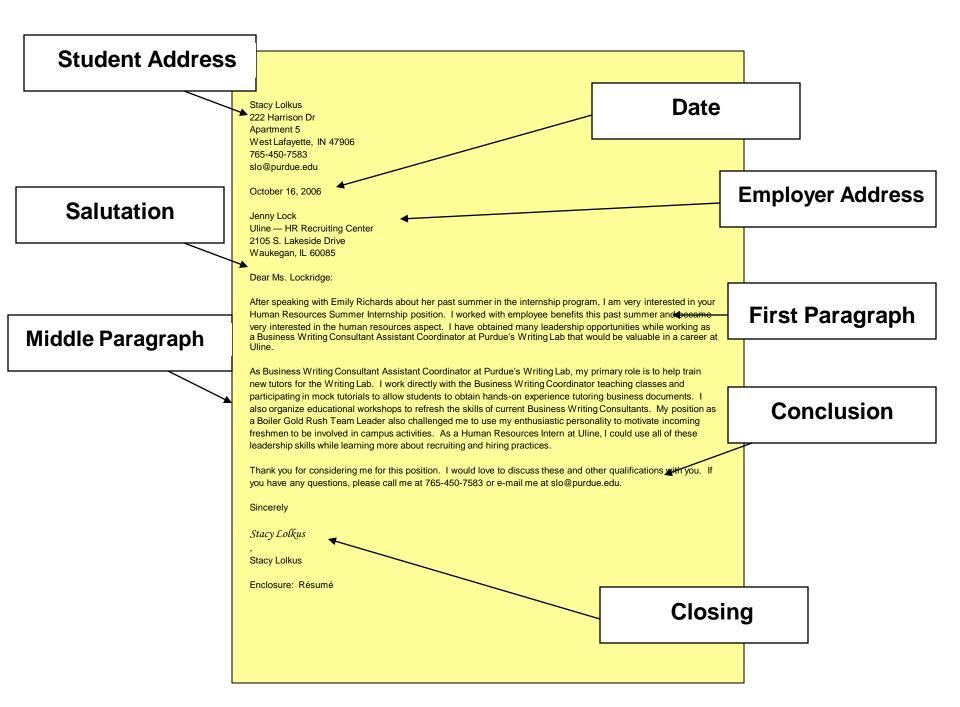


- A cover letter expresses interest and qualifications for a particular position
- Personal but professional
- Tailored to position/company
- Explains how you fit with organization and how you will help them
- Expands main points from your resume
- "Sells" qualifications to the prospective employer



Make sure you know: -General job information -Desired qualifications and skills -Key values and words

Research helps you tailor your cover letter -Look for mission statements, organization "vision," goals, etc.





 Make sure you address the letter to a specific person if possible (preferably the interviewer)

#### Header

Your Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Date

Name of Contact Person

Title

Organization

**Street Address** 

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Ms., Mr., Dr., (etc):



#### More Examples

#### Date

Name of Contact Person Title Organization Street Address City, State, Zip Code

Dear Ms., Mr., Dr. (etc):

October 4, 2006

Stacy Lo CEO Lo Labs 300 State St. Chicago, IL, 60611

Dear Ms. Lo:



## **Purpose:**

- •Get the reader's attention
- Introduce yourself
- •Explain purpose of letter
- •Explain why interested in the position or the company
  - Culture?
  - Approach?
- •Explain how you will help the organization
- •Preview the rest of the letter

# **Fi**

#### First Paragraph (Sample 1)

#### Dear Ms. Lo:

After speaking with Emily Richards about her past summer in the internship program, I am interested in your Human Resources Summer Internship position. I worked with employee benefits this summer and became interested in the human resources aspect of the position. In addition to the leadership opportunities I obtained while working as a Business Writing Consultant Assistant Coordinator for Purdue's Writing Lab, I have also developed my communication skills during my summer internship. I believe my skills will help your Human Resources department maintain its excellent track record.



## Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to apply for the position of part-time sales associate in the women's department at Macy's. My resume is attached.



- Highlight skills and benefits to the company
- Emphasize interest in the company
- Provide concrete evidence
  - Show don't tell (use information from resume)
  - Include specific, credible examples of qualifications for the position
- Begin paragraphs with topic sentences



As a banking representative at Chase, I provided quality customer service while promoting the sale of products to customers. I also handled close to \$20,000 each day and was responsible for balancing the bank's ATM machine. My experience with customer relations and money management can help your accounting firm expand its Middle East division located in Dubai.



As my resume shows, I have worked for the past two years as a sales representative for Forever 21. I also possess excellent skills in communication and demonstrate the motivation to learn more about the clothing industry.



- Conclude with next step
- Provide contact information

#### SAMPLE 1

I would like to discuss these and other qualifications with you to further explain how I can contribute to your Middle East operations. I look forward to meeting you soon. If you have any questions, please call me at 555-555-5555 or e-mail me at abcd@purdue.edu.

#### SAMPLE 2

I would like to meet with you to learn more about the position and to discuss my qualifications. Working for Macy's would be a great opportunity for me. I can be reached at the phone number indicated on my resume. Thank you for your consideration.



#### Sincerely,

## Simon Smith

Enclosure: Resume

Sincerely,

Simon Smith 5886 Tunbridge Crossing Fort Wayne, IN 46815 ssmith@purdue.edu

Enclosure: Resume



## Language: Weak Language:

I worked as a ramp agent at Comair.

## Strong Language:

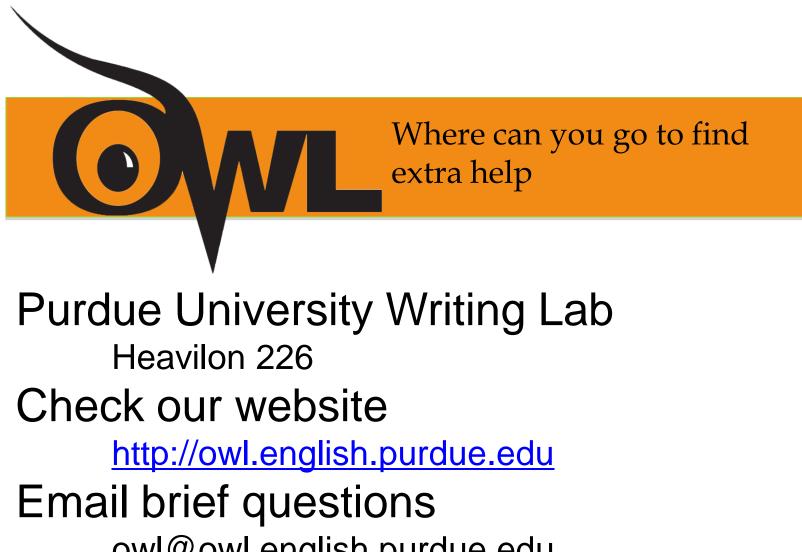
As a ramp agent, I assisted in loading baggage, oversaw fueling the aircraft, and stocked commissary items on the aircraft.



- Unprofessional language
- Length
  - Letter should only be one page
- Strongest and most relevant qualifications should be highlighted
  - Limit to a few qualifications
- Easy to read
  - Begin with topic sentences



- Appeal to company values, attitudes, goals, projects, etc.
- Explain how you will help organization
- Elaborate on the information in your resume
- Provide evidence of your qualifications
- Proofread carefully for grammatical and typographical errors



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By: Stacy Lolkus and Allen Brizee. Brought to you in cooperation with the Purdue Online Writing Lab