

# Writing a Cover Letter

Cover letters provide the link between your resume and the job description.

A good cover letter:

- Answers the question: "How will you help the organization meet their goals?"
- Links your accomplishments and skills to the job requirements. Why should they care about the items in your resume?
- Is unique for the particular position. You should not re-use cover letters for multiple positions.
- Focuses on how you'll contribute to the company, not an overview of your life story.
- Does not reiterate your resume but provides context for the items on your resume.

**Start your cover letter by answering the following questions.** This can become your first paragraph.

*What is interesting or unique about this organization? This could be their culture, size, location, mission, products, constituents, projects, etc. Why are these important to you?*

**Based on the job description and the organization's mission, what are the major skills or qualities that they are seeking in a candidate? List 2 to 3 below.**

*Example: Being able to work with both children and their parents*

- 1a.
- 2a.
- 3a.

**What is a specific experience you have that demonstrates that skill or quality? Example:** *Working at YMCA summer camp and talking parents and children through homesickness*

- 1b.
- 2b.
- 3b.

**How or why does the example connect to the skill or quality? How do A and B connect? Essentially: "With my experience in B, I would be able to \_\_\_\_ in this position."**

*Example: I helped children and their parents through difficult situations while working at the YMCA summer camp, and I would use my skills to do the same as a teacher at VT Preschool.*

- 1c.
- 2c.
- 3c.

**Then, 1b + 1c, 2b + 2c, 3b + 3c can become your second paragraph.**

Alexis Murphy  
40 University Heights  
Burlington, VT 05405  
January 30th, 2020

Henry Wu  
International Genetic Technologies  
100 Farallon Road  
Palo Alto, CA

Dear Dr. Wu:

As one of the most quickly-growing bioengineering startups in the world, InGen has proven itself to be at the leading edge of biological science and technology. I am excited about InGen's small team structure, its "work hard, play hard" mentality, and the world-renowned genetic advances that the company has produced. I am passionate about contributing to the field of genetic engineering, and could think of no better way to do so than as a Nucleic Acids Researcher at InGen.

This past summer I worked as an intern at Cyberdine, where I did immunology research. As part of my lab work I performed DNA concentration, created solutions, and used centrifuges. I programmed using MatLab and Python. Given InGen's similar lab structure, I feel like I could jump right in to run molecular biology experiments in the Nucleic Acids Researcher role. I also have experience leading groups. I have held a leadership position in the UVM Ski and Snowboard Club for the last two years, which is the largest group on campus. I organized trips, managed membership, built team morale, and managed the \$10,000 budget. I have experience organizing a group and its resources, and could do so again with the DNA-sequencing team at InGen. I also know that InGen puts the highest priority on compliance, and I would be able to contribute to the goal of creating a comfortable, safe working environment for all. I worked as an RA for three years in college and worked as a part of a team to ensure safe and comfortable living situations for 150 students. A safe working environment is important to me, and I would help ensure that in my work with the DNA-sequencing team.

I am excited about the possibility of joining the InGen team and contributing to its great accomplishments. I can be reached at [alexis.murphy@uvm.edu](mailto:alexis.murphy@uvm.edu) or 802-656-3131. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexis Murphy