



# LITERACY VOLUNTEERS

OF GREATER HARTFORD

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READ. LEARN. GROW.

## *How to Write a Cover Letter*



## Student Guide

# Workshop Objectives and Agenda



## **Objectives**

*At the end of the workshop, you will be able to:*

- (1) Use vocabulary and concepts related to cover letters in conversation with each other;
- (2) Identify what is included in an effective cover letter;
- (3) Write a cover letter to match a specific job.

## **Agenda**

- Introduction to Cover Letters
- Important Vocabulary
- Sections of a Cover Letter
- Tips for Success
- Creating Your Own Cover Letter

# Introduction to Cover Letters

Directions: Answer the following questions. Then discuss with your classmates.

1. What is a cover letter?
2. When do you need a cover letter?
3. Why is a cover letter important?

# About Cover Letters

To be considered for almost any job, you will need to write a special letter called a cover letter. A cover letter introduces you, explains why you are writing to an **employer**, describes your **experience** and **skills**, and requests an opportunity to meet with the potential employer.

A cover letter is usually your first **introduction** to an employer. It is often sent with a resume. Because **first impressions** are very important, you should take your time to write an effective letter. Remember that the cover letter not only tells the employer about your **accomplishments**, but it also shows how well you can communicate.

It's important to review the **job description** or **job posting** to find out what skills or experience the employer is looking for. Cover letters should be written to match the specific job you are applying for. When you prepare your cover letter, it's a good idea to ask a few people to review a **draft** of your cover letter and provide **suggestions** for improving it.



# Important Vocabulary

Directions: Describe each word below. Use your translators if needed. Can you give an example of each one?

1. Employer

2. Experience

3. Skills

4. Introduction

5. First Impression

6. Accomplishments

7. Job Description/Job Posting

8. Draft

9. Suggestions

# The Parts of a Cover Letter

**Directions:** Work in pairs to discover the parts or sections of a cover letter. Look at what a cover letter includes on page 7. Complete the following steps.

A. Write down the names of the five parts of a cover letter.

B. List an example of information that is included in each part of the cover letter.

<i>A. Parts of a cover letter</i>	<i>B. Information Included</i>
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	



# A Cover Letter includes:

## 1. Date

Today's Date

## 2. Person who will receive your cover letter

Name

Title

Company

Address

City, State, Zip Code

## 3. Greeting

Dear [Name of hiring manager],

## 4. Body of Letter

### ***First paragraph:***

- Mention the job you're applying for and where you found the job posting.
- Explain why the job interests you.

### ***Middle paragraph(s):***

- Discuss your experience and skills. You should show how your experience and skills match the requirements on the job description.
- This section should not be longer than one to two paragraphs.

### ***Final paragraph:***

- Say that you look forward to discussing your qualifications further. Provide your email address and phone number.
- Thank them for their time.

## 5. Close

Sincerely,

Your name

Your Address

Your City, State, Zip Code

# Tips for Success

## Do:

- **Match** your cover letter with the job you are applying for
- Write about the **strengths you can bring to the employer**, not what the employer can do for you
- Be **brief** and **concise**
- Keep the cover letter to **one page**
- Show a **positive attitude** with a focus on why they should hire you

## Don't:

- **Lie** or include false information
- Make any **typos** or misspellings
- Use **personal information** like marital status or social security number
- **Use the same cover letter** for different positions you apply for



# Sample Wording You Can Use

## 1. Date

*Today's Date*

## 2. Person who will receive your cover letter

*Name*

*Title*

*Company*

*Address*

*City, State, Zip Code*

## 3. Greeting

*Dear [Ms. Last Name, or Mr. Last Name],*

Use "To Whom It May Concern:" only when you do not know the name of the hiring manager.

## 4. Body of Letter

### **First paragraph:**

- *I am writing to apply for the position of \_\_\_\_\_ that I saw listed on \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *I am interested in the position because \_\_\_\_\_.*

### **Middle paragraph(s):**

- *My skills include \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *I have experience (or education) in the field of \_\_\_\_\_.*

Be sure to match your skills and experience with the job requirements.

### **Final paragraph:**

- *I believe that I am an excellent fit for your position.*
- *I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you in person. I can be reached at [your email address] and [your phone number].*
- *Attached is my resume for your review.*
- *Thank you for your time.*

## 5. Close

*Sincerely,*

*[Your name*

*Your Address*

*Your City, State, Zip Code]*

# Creating Your Own Cover Letter

**Directions:** Pick a job description from the samples in the back of your Student Guide starting on page 11. Use the space below to write a draft of your cover letter.

\*Refer to the sample cover letter wording on page 9 and the completed cover letter on page 17 to help you.\*

# **Sample Job Descriptions**

Pages 12-16

# **Sample Cover Letter**

Page 17

## **Daily Dog Walker**

Home Sweet Home Pet Care - Manchester, CT

Part-time

### Job Description

Home Sweet Home Pet Care is looking to hire a responsible, reliable, detail-oriented individual to join our team for pet care in and around the town of Manchester for Daily Dog Walks.

The primary responsibility of this position is to care for pets in a professional manner with a high standard of care and attention to detail while their owners are at work or away. This position is part-time only.

Apply online at [hshpetcare.net/about-us/employment](http://hshpetcare.net/about-us/employment).

This position requires physical activity including walking vigorously for 30 minute periods and running/playing in a yard throughout the day.

We are looking to hire team members in and around the town of Manchester. This unique job works best for someone who lives in or very near to Manchester.

### **Responsibilities:**

Walk/exercise dogs for daily walks

Close attention to detail regarding dog behavior/personality to properly assess their health and communicate to the owners any changes

Smart-phone capability in order to GPS track all jobs

Smart-phone capability in order to update clients via proprietary software, including pictures

Drive to jobs in a timely fashion and keep on schedule

Qualifications  
Must be at least 21 years of age.

Must have a valid driver's license

Must have a reliable and insured car

Must be able to pull against 100 pounds weight.

Must be able to meet the physical requirements of this job.

Must be available for Daily Dog Walks Monday-Friday, 10 AM-3 PM.

Must be available to work holidays and holiday weekends.

Must be available for vacation care one weekend a month, Saturday & Sunday 7AM-9AM, 11AM-2PM, 4PM-6PM, and 8PM-10PM.

## **Attendant I Manchester Memorial Hospital Manchester, CT**

The Attendant I reports to the Director of Food Services. This position performs a wide variety of functions to ensure high quality, sanitary food service to patients and customers. The primary tasks of this position include but are not limited to: stocking of supplies; patient food tray delivery and pick up; portioning/packaging food items; assisting in the packaging of meals for meals on wheels, patient snack delivery; serving customers, processing dishes in the dish room, and helping to maintain the overall cleanliness of the cafeteria and kitchen.

### **EDUCATION/CERTIFICATION**

- High school diploma or equivalent preferred but not required.

### **COMPETENCIES**

- Must have basic English reading and verbal communication skills to effectively communicate with co-workers, patients and care providers within the work environment.
- Must be able to perform basic math, i.e; addition and subtraction.
- Must be able to consistently exhibit considerate interpersonal relations with co-workers and maintain a strong customer service attitude, as demonstrated by behavior, when communicating and interacting with co-workers, patients and visitors.

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Disclaimer: Job descriptions are not intended, nor should they be construed to be, exhaustive lists of all responsibilities, skills, efforts or working conditions associated with the job. They are intended to be accurate reflections of the principal duties and responsibilities of this position. These responsibilities and competencies listed below may change from time to time.

#### Job-Specific Competency

1. Attends monthly department meetings.
2. Attends monthly departmental in-services.
3. Wears uniform following the ECHN and department uniform policy including appropriate hair covering at all times.
4. Washes hands and wears gloves following serve-safe and state regulatory requirements.
5. Completes all paperwork required by the position worked (such as dish machine temperatures).
6. Demonstrates a willingness to assist co-workers and adjusts daily work routines to the needs of the department.
7. Sets up, restocks and maintains a clean work station following all sanitation and safety requirements. Labels, dates and properly rotates stock.
8. Completes work as outlined in the position job flow within the scheduled shift time.
9. Delivers trays to patients following all facility and departmental policies and procedures.
10. Completes annual departmental serve-safe food safety training.
11. Demonstrates knowledge of basic modified diets.
12. Wears personal protective equipment as required.

## **Homemaker and Companion**

America Elderly Services

\$9.60 an hour

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**HOMEMAKER:** Vacuuming/Sweep Floors, Dusting, Wet mop Floors, Care of Bathroom, Making Beds, Changing Linens, Clean Kitchen, Wash Dishes, Meal Planning & Preparation and Empty Trash. Clean Refrigerator, Laundry, Marketing/ Shopping, Money Management (Bills, Deposit)

**COMPANION:** Supervision/Monitor of Activities, Remainder for Self-Administered Med. Assist with Phone calls/ communication, Read and Socialization. Escort to Recreational Activity, Accompany to Appt. (Medical, Business), Accompany to Walk.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

Driver License

Social Security

Vehicle

Car Insurance

Car Registration

Bilingual

Reliable, responsible, able and available to work

**CLEAN CRIMINAL BACKGROUND IS A MUST!!!**

CNA or PCA License.

### **CONTACT US:**

FERNANDO ESPINAR

WWW.AMERICAELDERLYSERVICES.COM

AMERICA ELDERLY SERVICES

747 MAPLE AVE

HARTFORD, CT 06114 TELF: (860) 832-8938 EXT: 303

### **Required experience:**

- Certified Nursing Assistant: 1 year
- Personal Care Assistant: 1 year
- Home Health Aid: 1 year
- Homemaker and Companion: 1 year

### **Required licenses or certifications:**

- Driver's License
- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
- Personal Care Assistant
- Home Health Aide

### **Required education:**

- High school or equivalent

### **Required language:**

- Spanish

## **Guest Service Agent/Front Desk**

TMI Hospitality- Manchester, CT

### **JOB SUMMARY**

The Guest Service Agent is responsible for taking reservations, greeting and registering guests, providing outstanding guest service during their stay, and settling the guest's account upon completion of their stay.

### **JOB DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Greets, registers, and assigns rooms to guests.
- Handles confidential information, including guest records, with a high degree of integrity.
- Promptly and effectively deals with guest requests and complaints.
- Answers and routes calls as appropriate; takes guest messages with accuracy.
- Responsible for cash drawer contents and transactions during shift.
- Maintains accurate records including cash flows, registration cards, reservation cards, and property walks.
- Answers inquiries pertaining to hotel services, registration of guests, and travel directions.
- Assists with sales and marketing efforts as directed by the General Manager.
- Offers and properly handles requests for wake-up calls.
- Records pertinent guest information in the pass on log.
- May assist in replenishing continental breakfast as needed and keeping breakfast area clean.
- Ensures common area/lobby is clean.
- Performs laundry functions as directed.
- Other duties as assigned.

### **EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, LICENSURE & CERTIFICATION**

- A minimum of one to three months related experience; or equivalent combination of training and experience.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, & ABILITIES**

- Requires the ability to read, write, and speak the English language.
- Ability to identify and resolve problems in a timely manner; develops alternative solutions and uses reason even when dealing with emotional topics.
- Ability to manage difficult or emotional customer situations; includes the ability to respond promptly to customer needs and requests for service and assistance.
- Ability to maintain a high level of professionalism; treats others with respect and consideration regardless of their status or position.
- Knowledge of and ability to appropriately interpret and follow policies and procedures.
- Knowledge of and ability to adhere to safety and security procedures; reports potentially unsafe conditions; uses equipment and materials properly.
- Ability to present and express ideas and information clearly and concisely in a manner appropriate to audience, whether oral or written.
- Skill in the use of personal computers and related software applications.
- Ability to meet the demands of the work schedule, to be at work and on time. May occasionally require the ability to work outside of regularly scheduled hours. Schedules may vary based on business need.

## **Receptionist/Office Assistant**

CCO, LLC - Rocky Hill, CT

\$11 an hour

This Rocky Hill office is seeking enthusiastic professionals to join our expanding operations as a Receptionist/Office Admin.

Note: We are looking to fill this position immediately.

### Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Responsible for providing the first positive impression of CCO, LLC
- Responsible for customer service to all stakeholders on the phone and in the office
- Ability to work well with a diverse population
- Keep records of client interaction
- Maintain a clean work environment
- Organization of resources within CCO, LLC
- Operates paging/telephone system as required
- Answers telephone, determines nature of call and relays information within CCO, LLC as necessary. Takes messages if necessary for unavailable personnel
- Prepare mail and other correspondence as necessary- Responsible for time keeping of all office employees

### Physical Functions

- Ability to occasionally lift and/or carry up to 30 pounds from ground to overhead
- Must be able to move intermittently throughout the day, proper body mechanics required—bending, stooping, turning, stretching, reaching above the shoulders and occasional lifting are involved.

### Minimum Qualifications

- High School Degree or Equivalent
- Ability to handle all inquiries and contacts in a professional, tactful, and pleasant manner- Strong organizational skills and time-management skills
- Attention to detail
- Ability to use Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Outlook, Excel) effectively
- Must be able to observe, listen, and communicate effectively

This job requirements list is not a complete description of all responsibilities but the list reflects the general qualifications, duties, and/or responsibilities necessary to perform this position. CCO, LLC reserves the right to revise the job description when circumstances are necessary for reasons like, but not limited to, new systems, technical developments, emergencies, work-load, and/or personnel changes.

Job Type: Full-time

Salary: \$11.00 /hour

Required experience:

- Office Environment: 1 year

Required education:

- High school or equivalent



# Sample Cover Letter

July 7, 2016

John Jones  
Pinegrove Hospital  
345 Bayside Drive  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(860) 323-1234

Dear Mr. Jones,

I am writing to apply for the position of Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), listed on your company's website. With three years of experience in fast-paced hospital settings, I have the skills and hands-on experience to deliver positive results in this role.

Currently, I am a Certified Nursing Assistant at St. Mary's Hospital where I provide physical and emotional support to patients along with assistance to families. Prior to this, I held similar hospital roles at East Hospital and Johnson Hospital where I was known for my ability to provide caring services through effective listening and follow through. In addition to these experiences, I am working on my Bachelor of Science in Nursing. I am an adaptable team player with effective problem solving skills. I am fluent in Spanish.

I believe that I am a strong candidate for your position. I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you. Attached is my resume for your review. I can be reached at [jdelago@gmail.com](mailto:jdelago@gmail.com) and 860-123-4567. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Juan Delgado