

# Addressing and Writing Your Cover Letter

Enter the contact person's name, title, employer, and mailing address. You need to have your letter on a thumb drive so you can personalize and modify it each time. Because it is so easy to use a computer and save your letter, each letter can be individualized quickly. Here is how to set up the person's name and address:

Mr. Paul Jones  
Supervisor  
Smythe Corporation  
1900 M. Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006

If you are applying for an advertised job that does not give an individual's name, then try to find the name of the hiring person or the person reviewing incoming resumes. Put some effort into searching for a name. Using a name can get your letter and resume to the hiring manager more quickly and can be an effective personal touch. If you know which department has the opening, you can call the company and ask the operator for the department manager's name. you can also search the company's Web site and try to find the manager's name. If you're applying to a giant corporation and the ad says "Human Resources Director, Marriott Corporation", expect that your resume will be scanned. In this last case, you may not be able to get an individual's name.

## Opening Paragraph

Here are four types of opening paragraphs, depending on how you learned of the position:

### Classified Advertisement

*I read your advertisement in the Washington Post for a Telemarketer on Sept. 28, 2020.*

### Unsolicited Mailing

With an unsolicited mailing, you send companies your resume without being asked or without seeing a specific ad, just in case they need someone like you. Unsolicited resumes are usually not effective, so try to talk with managers at companies you're interested in before sending resumes.

*I would like to apply for a position as a Telemarketer with Smythe Corporation. I am seeking a summer position where I can use my communications skills and work with the public.*

### The Internet

You may also find leads on internet job sites and company Web sites. Here is how to write an opening paragraph for such a lead:

*I am sending my enclosed resume and application for the Telemarketer position with Smythe Corporation. I found the opening listed on your website. I am*

*seeking a position where I can use my communications skills and work with the public.*

## **Referral**

A referral is a job lead from a neighbor, friend, mentor, or someone else in your network. Sometimes a person in your network will speak to the hiring person about you. This is truly the best way to find a job. Employers appreciate referrals. Referrals save them from reviewing hundreds of applications. Employers trust the recommendation of a valued employee or friend who stated that you would be a good employee. Sometimes departments are filled with the friends of a few people.

To get referrals, talk to people in your network. Tell them what you are looking for where, when, and why. They need to know your objectives very well. Ask them to think about leads they might have. Tell them that you will call back in a couple of days. This is an accepted practice for job searches, and you may be amazed at how many job leads you get.

## **Here are three sample opening paragraphs for a cover letter based on a referral:**

**Sample 1.** *I am sending my resume to you because of a referral from Mike Thomas, an associate in your Annapolis store. I am seeking a summer internship where I can use my communications skills and work with the public.*

**Sample 2.** *I was referred to you by Mike Thomas, who is my neighbor. He tells me that you frequently hire dependable, hard-working high school seniors in your telemarketing department.*

**Sample 3.** *I was referred to you by Mike Thomas, who is a member of my church and a longtime family friend. I understand you are hiring student interns in your telemarketing department. Mike recommended that I write to you and send my resume for your consideration.*

## **Middle Paragraph**

Next is a summary of your background and critical skills (hard skills) to show you are a match for the position:

*As my resume indicates, I am active in theater in high school and had excellent roles in two plays. I am also successful in debate and student government. With these experiences, I can offer excellent communication and interpersonal skills. I maintain a 3.0 average and worked 10 hours per week during the school year. I possess computer skills such as familiarity with PCs, Windows 10, Microsoft Office 365. I use the Internet regularly and can keyboard more than 45 words per minute.*

## **Second Middle Paragraph**

This is your persuasive paragraph with a few soft skills:

*If you are seeking a dependable, hard-working, and friendly young person to work in your department for the summer, I would like to be considered.*

## **Contact Information and Closing**

*I am available afternoons at (555 555-5555) after 4 p.m. I have voicemail on that number. I will call you in a couple of days to see if I can make an appointment to discuss a summer position. Thank you for your time and consideration.*

*Sincerely,*

*Kimberly Ann Garrett*

*Enclosure: resume*

If your resume and letter were sent in response to a classified ad with no phone number, or if the company is large and receiving hundreds of resumes, you may not be able to call. In that case, state:

*“I look forward to hearing from you soon.”*

Think about the company's products and services when you write your cover letter. Think about the hiring person's needs. How could you help this person with his or her department? Would you be good with the company's customers? If so, the company would be lucky to have you, right? Get the manager to recognize your interest and talents through your letter and resume.