

Never send out a resume without a well-designed, position-specific cover letter. The purpose of this letter is to match your skills, education, and experience to the employer's needs and to express your interest in the position and the company/organization. Here are a few tips:

- As with the resume, the cover letter should be printed on high quality resume paper if you are mailing it and/or hand delivering.
- Include a cover letter even if you are e-mailing your resume to an employer.
- Always address the letter to a specific individual. Call HR to request the name of someone on the hiring committee if you can't find one online. If you are unable to find a specific name, use "Dear Hiring Manager," "Dear Committee Chair," etc. Never say, "To Whom It May Concern," as it sounds very cold and impersonal.
- It's best to have a position posting in front of you when you write the cover letter so that you can tailor your letter to the needs of the company as expressed in the posting.
- Research the employer prior to writing the letter. Tell them why you want to work for them!
- Be confident and positive (market yourself!), but be careful not to sound arrogant.
- Don't just regurgitate your resume. Provide *examples* of your qualifications that make you well suited for the job.
- Keep the cover letter to one page or less, and follow the paragraph structure described below.

**First Paragraph:** The first paragraph simply tells what position you are applying for and how you learned of the position. If you know someone at the company, or if someone referred you, be sure to mention it in your first paragraph in order to catch the reader's attention. You could also state why you are interested in the position or what attracted you to the company (to show that you have researched the company.)

**Second Paragraph:** This one is a little harder, but you basically want to tell the employer why they should hire you! Describe your accomplishments, previous experience, and job-specific skills. (You can use one or two paragraphs for this section.) Be selective. There's no need to restate everything that is on your resume. A good tip is to look at the qualifications listed on the position announcement, then make sure you respond to each qualification listed. You are establishing your case for an interview so indicate at least three accomplishments that fit directly with what the employer is looking for. Focus on what you can do for the company instead of what the company can do for you.

**Last Paragraph:** This paragraph closes the letter and does four things: 1) Requests a meeting or interview at the employer's convenience; 2) Offers a follow-up date that you will get in touch with the employer; 3) Invites the employer to contact you with questions (include phone number and e-mail address here); and 4) Thanks the employer for his/her time and consideration. You may state that you will be in the area during a specific period of time and will make contact with the employer when you arrive in that city. You may take an aggressive approach by indicating a specific week in which you will contact the employers to follow-up. For example, "I will contact you the week of April 12 to schedule an interview." Allow the employer enough time (1-2 weeks) to review the resume before you follow up.

# Anita A. Jobb

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Jackson, MS • (601) 555-5555 • [anita@go.olemiss.edu](mailto:anita@go.olemiss.edu) • [www.linkedin.com/anita.a.jobb](http://www.linkedin.com/anita.a.jobb)

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February 15, 2018

Mr. Charles Boswell  
Human Resources Director  
Summerville Clothing Company  
2000 Cannon Court  
Memphis, TN 38117

Dear Mr. Boswell:

I am writing to express my interest in the Executive Training Program for Summerville Clothing Company as detailed on the company's Human Resources Website. I was immediately attracted to the position because of Summerville's commitment to customer service and the tremendous growth opportunity within the company. Additionally, my prior experience in retail and my student leadership at the University of Mississippi make me a strong candidate for the rotational program.

I am a senior at the University of Mississippi majoring in Psychology with a minor in Spanish and will graduate in May 2018. My passion for the retail industry began when I started working for Macy's in the Juniors Department during high school. I found that I enjoyed working with customers in determining their needs, matching those needs with a quality product, thereby building relationships with satisfied consumers. I was further motivated by our team sales goals and enjoyed thinking of creative ways to feature new products. This passion carried over to my student leadership position with Kappa Sigma Nu, where I established and helped exceed target fundraising goals for the Donate My Dress Foundation, which provides prom dresses to underprivileged youth. A study abroad opportunity to Stellenbosch University, South Africa, further enabled me to apply these skills as I worked with a team to gather used clothing from affluent communities for needy children in a local township. I will bring this same energy to Summerville Clothing Company.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and discuss my potential contribution to the Summerville team. If you require additional information, please call me at (601) 555-5555 or email [anita@go.olemiss.edu](mailto:anita@go.olemiss.edu). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Anita A. Jobb