



## Career Development

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### BUILDING A COVER LETTER

**The purpose of your resume** is to excite an employer enough to call you in for an interview. Likewise, the purpose of the cover letter is to get an employer to read your resume, a copy of which accompanies the letter.

The basics of writing a cover letter are detailed on the sample cover letter below. In addition, here are some simple rules to keep in mind:

- Your goal is to give your reader enough information to interest him or her in looking at your resume, but not so much that the reader is overwhelmed.
- It's best to address your letter to a person, so always research the company you are applying to and find out the name of an individual to write to. Often the best person to contact is the head of the department you wish to work in.
- A good rule of thumb to use in deciding if you should answer a classified ad is to answer it if you have 80 percent of the skills or background that it says the job requires.
- If you're writing to someone to whom you've been referred, be sure to name your referent in your first paragraph.

121 South 24<sup>th</sup> Street  
Apartment #301  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
(215)555-1212

**Include your address  
and phone number.**

April 19, 2001

**Include the date.**

Carol Manager  
Nursing Care Coordinator  
Family Birthing Center  
Pennsylvania Hospital  
120 South 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

**Include the name, title and address of the  
person to whom you are writing.**

Dear Ms. Manager:

**PARAGRAPH 1 - Tell your contact what you want and how you know about his/her organization.**

While researching the New Jersey healthcare marketplace, I learned of your facility and would like to be considered for the position of a Graduate Nurse in Labor and Delivery. My resume is enclosed.

**PARAGRAPH 2 - Give a concise overview of your work history and the skills you have that will help you perform the job.**

In May of 2001, I will complete my Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing at Thomas Jefferson University. The program at Jefferson is intensive and gave me hand-on experience through clinical rotations. In my rotations, I worked on several units including medical-surgical, psychiatry, pediatrics, and obstetrics. In addition, I completed an independent study based on my work at Tennessee Nursing Service (TNS) this past summer. As a volunteer at TNS, I spent 10 weeks observing and assisting a Certified Nurse Midwife during clinical visits and labor and delivery. This Spring my clinical rotations will include six weeks on a high-risk maternity unit in a large inner-city hospital.

**PARAGRAPH 3 - State your confidence in your abilities and give information on how you can be contacted.**

I am confident my skills and experience would prove beneficial to your organization and I would welcome an opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in person. I can be reached after 5:00 p.m. at (215)555-1212, or you may leave a message on my answering machine and I will return the call promptly.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erin Gilmartin **Beneath your signature, type your name.**

Enclosure **Alert your reader to the fact that another document - your resume - accompanies your letter.**