

COVER LETTERS

Each time you submit your resume, you should enclose a cover letter. This letter should be a concise expression of your intentions and should also complement your curriculum vitae. There may be pertinent information about you which is not included in your CV, particularly with relation to specific qualifications or skills. You may want to mention these in your cover letter.

Here are some recommendations for your letter:

- It should highlight your qualifications for the position you desire.
- It should refer to a specific residency program and how you learned about it.
- It should be addressed to a particular individual. However, when the advertisement does not give a name, the letter should be addressed to either Residency Program Director or To Whom It May Concern.
- It should be neatly typed and printed on formal resume paper.
- It should address your short-term and long-term career goals.

In general, a cover letter should represent your personal style while maintaining a business-like format.

GENERAL RULES FOR WRITING COVER LETTERS

Always type, using a business-letter format.

No spelling errors, no corrections; be careful and be neat.

Use white or off-white high quality paper that is no larger than 8 ½ x 11. Do not use onionskin.

Preparation:

- Look at advertisements carefully and include the information that is requested.
- List information about yourself that meets the job requirements.
- Use action words to highlight your qualifications.
- Write a rough draft and correct it before writing a final copy.
- Carefully proofread your final copy and have others double-check what you wrote.

HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER

Your name (optional)
Your address
City, State ZIP

Date

Addressee
Title
Company/Organization
Address
City, State ZIP

Dear Person: (use the name of the interviewer or residency program director)

First paragraph. State how you learned of the company or position which you are applying. Be sure to clearly state the reason for which you are writing the letter. Include your short-term and long-term career goals, particularly why you have decided to pursue a residency position over other career opportunities.

Second paragraph. Indicate why you are interested in the company, organization, or position. If the job announcement or advertisement specifies any required qualifications, indicate the ways in which you meet these requirements. This is the place to include information that is not in your CV or to reemphasize special qualifications already in your CV. If you learned specific details about the position during a preliminary discussion at ASHP Midyear (residency showcase) or by email or phone discussion, include the details of what drew you to this program or what made you apply specifically for this position in this paragraph. In addition, this is the chance to specify exactly what strengths you have that would make this the optimal program for you (highlight accomplishments both in your CV and in addition to what is in your CV).

Third paragraph. Close the letter with an indication of your willingness to come on for an interview at the interviewer's convenience. Offer encouragement in terms of your ability to be an effective addition to the company/organization and indicate that you look forward to hearing from them in the near future.

Sincerely,

Your name

COVER LETTER – GOOD EXAMPLE

IMA PHARMACY STUDENT

250 Coulter Rd, Apt #52
Amarillo, TX 79106
(214) 372-5300
Ima.student@ttuhsc.edu
ASHP Match #11973

21 December 2009

Roger Director, Pharm.D.
Department of Clinical Pharmacy
Room C-152, Box 0622
University Medical Center
Lubbock, TX 55002-0622

Dear Dr. Director:

I am applying for a pharmacy practice residency position at University Medical Center with anticipation that it will be a challenging and progressive program that will assist me in achieving my immediate and long term career goals. My short term goal following a pharmacy practice residency is to become a specialized oncology clinician through completion of an oncology specialty residency. Following specialty training, I wish to pursue a two-year fellowship to further develop my clinical research skills. My ultimate professional goal is to become a future clinical leader in my specialty field of interest with active involvement in health care research.

My primary expectation of a pharmacy practice residency is one of opportunity. It is my desire to participate in a program that promotes pharmacists as integral members of the health care team and that provides opportunities for residents to go above and beyond traditional pharmacy training. In particular, I am seeking a program that offers an intense year of rigorous learning experiences and practice within a diverse environment. In speaking with your current residents, I feel that they are actively involved in making recommendations to the medical teams. During my residency experience I wish to build upon my strengths and interests while also addressing areas of weakness. The immediate goals I have for participating in a pharmacy practice residency are to develop my skills in leadership, project organization and presentation, decision-making, teaching, and research.

Enclosed is my curriculum vitae and application documents which provide a complete overview of my academic and professional experiences. My academic preparation includes clinical rotations in Advanced Hospital, Organ Transplantation, Geriatrics, Ambulatory Care, Oncology, and Pediatrics. By the end of the academic year, I will have completed rotations in the areas of Cardiology, Nephrology, Drug Information, and Internal medicine. The primary specialty fields that interest me at this time are Oncology and Infectious Diseases. Since your program offers PGY2 programs in both Infectious Diseases and Oncology, I feel this strength would complement my goals and interests nicely.

As requested, I have arranged to have reference letters and transcripts sent directly to your institution. I have included the names and addresses of the four references who have agreed to provide you with letters of recommendation. After exploring the available literature on your program and my discussions with the current residents and preceptors at the ASHP Midyear Meeting, I am certain your institution offers an excellent learning opportunity that can be tailored to my interests. I look forward to meeting with you and discussing this opportunity further. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (214) 372-5300.

Sincerely,

Ima P. Student, Pharm.D. Candidate

COVER LETTER – BAD EXAMPLE

March 2009

Amie Taggart Blaszczyk, Pharm.D., CGP, BCPS, FASCP
Assistant Professor Pharmacy Practice- Geriatrics
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
School of Pharmacy-Dallas/Fort Worth
4500 S. Lancaster Rd
Building 7-R#119A
Dallas, TX 75216214-372-5300 x 241
amie.blaszczyk@ttuhsc.edu

Dear Dr. Blaszczyk:

I am applying for your PGY-2 geriatrics residency position from July 2009 through June 2010. [these dates are not necessary] I became interested in geriatrics care during my one-year long geriatrics course at the University of Hope College of Pharmacy. My sense of compassion and respect for the elderly patients. [ENGLISH? And it is repeated again below] I sensed the need and gained insights into caring for the elderly. My favorite rotations during as a student were my rotations in psychiatry and geriatrics adult medicine. I participated in a number of activities, including clinical rounds, brown bag discussions, and patient counseling, all of which solidified my desire to work with elderly patients during my career.

Since starting my PGY-1 residency at University Medical Center, my 2 favorite rotations are adult medicine and family practice. My sense of compassion and respect for the elderly patients. Behind the scenes of researching drug information questions, making pharmacotherapy recommendations, and conducting therapeutic serum drug monitoring were very meaningful and significant [again, grammar problems]. I am still on the journey to develop my skill set in conducting research, drug utilization reviews, applying geriatrics pharmacotherapy, critical critiquing medical literature, medical writing and presentations. In the next 5 years, I plan to be a board certified pharmacotherapy specialist and certified geriatric pharmacist practicing in acute inpatient, long-term, and ambulatory care settings.

After reviewing your program and speaking with you (talking with your current residents [of note—she didn't have any current residents at the time, so this was a bad use of a template]), I am convinced that your practice site will be an ideal setting for me to pursue my career interests. At the same time, I am confident that I can contribute to your organization's performance improvement goals. This training will sharpen and fine tune my skill set [talks about tools one too many times] and in return make a direct impact in improving the quality of life of our patients [grammar issues and they are not this candidate's patients yet]. Together, we can bring a fresh and enthusiastic perspective to our

organization. [again, it is not this candidate's organization yet—avoid the use of 'our' in a cover letter referring to the institution being applied to]

I've attached my CV. I look forward to meeting with you and your staff about securing [securing sounds like securing the tools referred to throughout this letter—choose a word like 'obtaining'] the geriatrics residency position.

Sincerely,

Ima G. Student, Pharm.D. Candidate