

Cover Letter Workbook



By the Winnipeg Transition Centre

For more info contact:

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COVER LETTER

Prepare a cover letter every time you submit your resume, whether you are responding to an advertisement, following up an employer cold call or pursuing a lead from a friend.

WRITING A COVER LETTER

Before you begin to write

Every cover letter requires planning and organizing. Prepare answers to each of these questions:

Why am I writing this letter? (focus statement)

I am writing this letter to.....

What do I want to happen as a result of this letter? (outcome statement)

I want....

Whom am I writing this letter to? (reader's perspective)

Look at the letter from the point of view of the reader.

Writing the Letter

Prepare a personalized cover letter for each job. Target the letter to ensure that the needs of the employer are met. This can be accomplished by paraphrasing or incorporating some of the terms or words from the ad or your telephone call into your letter.

Type your cover letter unless otherwise specified. It must be free of grammatical, spelling or typing errors. Never cross out, white out or leave in errors. Do not make use of abbreviations. Remember to include your return address, your telephone number, the date and the employer's address.

The cover letter is a reflection of you. Make a positive first impression.

PARTS OF THE COVER LETTER

Reference Line

Bold and centre the position title, where you saw the ad and the date.
For example:

Sales Position
Winnipeg Free Press, *Day, Month, Year*

Salutation

Try to find out the name and gender of the person who will be reviewing your resume. Be sure you spell the name correctly. Use a colon (:) after the salutation. If you are unable to find out the name, avoid the use of “To Whom It May Concern” or “Dear Sir / Madam”. Just go to the first paragraph of your letter.

Paragraphs

Keep them short – generally no more than three sentences each. Long paragraph will be skimmed over and the message may be lost.

Opening Paragraph

This is your chance to make a great first impression. Use this paragraph to set the tone and deliver the message. Make it fresh and interesting. A good strategy is to mention something favourable that you know about the company.

If you haven't used a reference line, the first paragraph should clearly state the position and where you heard about it. When the following up leads from friends, ask if you can use their names. If you are responding to an advertisement in the newspaper, state the name of the paper and the date of the advertisement. Follow-up letters to employer calls will include a reminder of the initial call either to them or the office support staff you directed you to send the letter.

Middle Paragraph

These paragraphs should answer the question, “Why am I an excellent candidate for this position candidate for this position?” Refer to your calling card and resume. Highlight those strengths (education, experience, volunteer work, skills) which specifically relate to the job. Reflect back some of the words, terms or skills that were mentioned in the job posting or newspaper advertisement.

Final Paragraph

The final paragraph is your chance to leave a positive impression. It should highlight your desire to meet with the person to talk about employment opportunities and to emphasize that you would like to be considered for an available position now or in the future. Be sure to provide for follow-up by mentioning your phone number or indicating a date you will call.

The Closing

Sign the letter with “Sincerely”. Be sure to sign your name. Indicate an enclosure in the lower left hand corner.

Follow-Up

Call within a week after sending your resume to make sure the employer received it. This will allow you a means of reviewing your qualifications with the employer and reiterating your interest in present or future employment opportunities.

Continue to follow-up by phone on a regular basis. This will ensure you and your skills are remembered.

COVER LETTER SAMPLES



RESPONSE TO NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

Brian Swanson
23 Sage Crescent
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2Y 0X8

(204) 668-2109

Date

Ben Gerard
Area Sales Manager
HILTI (Canada) Ltd.
120 Bannerman Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3X 2S4

HILTI (Canada) Ltd.
Sales Representative

Hilti is currently seeking an experienced sales representative to cover a Winnipeg and rural Manitoba territory. The successful applicant will be responsible for providing quality service through promotion, sales, ordering and merchandising of industrial power tools.

Applicants will have a proven sales record in consumer product sales and services and be able to contribute to the development and implementation of aggressive sales plans for profitable volume growth. As well, he/she must demonstrate the ability to establish successful customer and staff relationships.

The compensation package will include salary, incentive bonus and car allowance. If you are a self-starter and interested in this challenging and rewarding position forward your resume in confidence to: Area Sales Manager; Hilti (Canada) Ltd.; 120 Bannerman Avenue, Winnipeg R3X 2S4

Dear Mr. Gerard:

Please accept my application for the position of Sales Representative for Winnipeg and rural Manitoba as advertised in the January 2nd edition of the Winnipeg Free Press.

I am self-motivated professional with extensive experience in territory sales and management. A high level of sales and customer satisfaction reflect my skills in marketing and customer service. As well, previous employment produced tasks where I managed and upgraded a dealer organization, prospected for new customers, successfully represented employer and dealers to consumers in trade shows and conducted customer and dealer service seminars.

I am a loyal, dedicated sales person who enjoys developing and maintaining good client relations and have always contributed to the team effort. I would like to compete for the position with HILTI (Canada) Ltd. with a personal interview at your convenience.

Respectfully,

Brian W. Swanson
Enclosure

RESPONSE TO NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

Your Name
Your Address
City, Province Postal Code

Date

Contact's Name
Title
Company Name
Company Address
City, Province Postal Code

Dear (Contact)

Please consider this an application for the position of _____ as advertised in the _____ (newspaper) on _____ (day, date and year) _____.

As indicated in my attached resume, I have _____ (year of experience in the industry especially in the areas relating to _____) _____. Over the past _____ years, I have gained valuable _____ skills as a _____; I would like to work for a company such as yours that offers opportunities for _____.

For these reasons, I feel that I would be a valuable asset to the _____ (company name) _____ team. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications and the position in further detail. To arrange such an interview, I may be contacted at _____ (telephone #) _____.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Encl.

RESPONSE TO AN EMPLOYER CALL

Robert Polk
424 Murray Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4A2

(204) 772-4812

October 15, 2001

Mr. Garry Watson
General Manager
Kuehne and Nagel Inc.
P.O. Box 893
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2X 2T1

Dear Mr. Watson:

Following your suggestion in our recent telephone conversation, I am forwarding my resume for a warehouse position when future employment opportunities arise.

As mentioned to you, I am an achiever with several years experience as a successful warehouseman. Besides having specialized training in the field of loss/damage claims and transportation insurance, I have always set high standards and consistently achieved my goals. I am highly motivated, team oriented and know I would be an asset to Kuehne and Nagel Inc.

I look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you to discuss my experience and skills in greater detail. During the day, I can be reached at 338-3899 and at 338-3090 in the evenings.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Polk

Encl.

SUGGESTED BY RECEPTIONIST

Robert Polk
424 Murray Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4A2

(204) 772-4812

November 3, 2001

Mr. Darcie Nasper
Warehouse Manager
Livingstone Distribution Centres Inc.
1700 Inkster Boulevard
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2X 2T1

Dear Mr. Nasper:

As suggested by your receptionist, I am enclosing my resume for your review and consideration.

I have held responsible positions in Transportation, Administration and Management, contributing meaningfully to the on-going success of each employer. I have demonstrated an enthusiasm and flexible outlook with particular emphasis on precision, reliability and pragmatism.

As well as being a quick learner, I am a hard worker and work well independently or as a part of a team. I feel that I would be an asset to Livingstone.

Should you wish further clarification or information about my experience and qualifications, I can be reached during the day at 338-3899 and at 338-30040 in the evenings.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Polk
Encl.

RESPONSE TO NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

William Smith

12 Lodge Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 2J0

(204) 983-9867
(204) 832-0987

November 2, 2001

Mr. John Dafoe
Manager, Human Resources
Manitoba Television Network
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3K 0F5

Dear Mr. Dafoe:

File Number: 111 – Vice President of Finance

I am most interested in your advertisement. I believe my qualifications provide the combination of

YOUR REQUIREMENTS

Significant expertise in property development, financial structuring, banking, capital formation

Exposure in positions responsible for financial and strategic analysis, tax planning and accounting.

Tam player, skilled people manager.

MY QUALIFICATIONS

Over 12 years experience in property development, construction and management. Negotiated over \$100 million in financing.

Headed tax and accounting functions for two public real estate companies.

Negotiated acquisitions, developed 10-year strategic plans.

Truly enjoy working with people and take pride in the achievements that make a winning team.

skills and experience you are seeking.

I have enclosed a resume and look forward to discussing this opportunity with you.

Sincerely,

William Smith

RESPONSE TO NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

Lori Yarrow
372 Bruce Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 0G4
(204) 453-2103

June 5, 2001

Winnipeg Free Press
Box 293
1355 Mountain Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2X 3B6

PERSON FRIDAY – advertised Month, Day and Year – Winnipeg Free Press

I am most interested in your advertisement. I am eager to work for a progressive company. I believe my qualifications provide the combination of skills and experience you are seeking.

YOUR REQUIREMENTS

Excellent oral and written communication

Experience with Microsoft Office, Lotus and Super Calc.

Ability to work in a busy environment with minimum supervision.

MY QUALIFICATIONS

Corporate receptionist for Public Service Centre. Constant contact with customers in the service industry. Taken several courses focusing on public speaking.

Worked with Wang Office, Microsoft Office, Super Calc and Lotus 1-2-3.

Several years as a serving personnel in a demanding well-frequent restaurant.

Maintained deadlines in processing contractual information for performers.

I have enclosed a resume detailing my background. I feel that the position described would warrant a salary in the range of \$21,000 to \$25,000 which could be negotiable depending on further information provided by you. I look forward to discussing this position and my qualifications with you.

Sincerely,

Lori Yarrow
Encl.

RESPONSE TO NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

Mary Dobbs
126 Lodge Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 2G1

(204) 837-0987

August 15, 2002

Canadian Airlines International
570 Ferry Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 0B1

DO/YWG – 2 Duty Officer Position and OPS ASS/YWG – 4 Operations Assistant Position

I was thrilled upon reading your recent advertisement in the Winnipeg Free Press. It is refreshing to see an airline company expanding during times of widespread cutbacks.

The positions of Duty Officer and Operations Assistant are of particular interest to me as I have a strong desire for a career in airline operations. The following qualifications warrant your serious consideration:

- ❑ 9 years in the aviation industry in operational and administrative roles
- ❑ Conversant in Air Regulations, Air Navigations Orders (including Large Air Carrier Order), weather minima and de-icing
- ❑ Experienced in flight dispatch, scheduling, weight and balance calculations
- ❑ Knowledgeable in ticketing, freight handling, baggage and cargo transfer
- ❑ Superior public relations and supervisory skills
- ❑ In possession of valid driver's licence and vehicle
- ❑ Open to shift work

I am a responsible person who thrives on challenges and I am excited at the prospect of demonstrating my commitment to the continued success of such a dynamic airline company.

I am certain that you will find me to be an outstanding candidate and would like to be considered for either operations position. I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss how I might best meet your needs. I may be reached at 837-0987. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Dobbs

Encl.

OPENINGS FOR COVER LETTERS

Response to Newspaper Ad

- ❑ The _____ position available at ____ (company name) ____, recently advertised in the _____ (paper name) _____, is of great interest to me. I believe my qualifications provide the combination of skills and experience you are seeking.
- ❑ The opportunity to work for ____ (company) _____ is very exciting. I am most interested in the _____ position recently advertised in the _____ (paper name) _____.
- ❑ Please consider my qualifications for the position of _____ recently advertised in the _____ (paper name) _____.

Response to Cold Call

- ❑ As requested in our recent telephone conversation, please find enclosed my resume for your review and consideration. I am very interested in obtaining a _____ position with ____ (company name) _____.
- ❑ As suggested by your receptionist, I am forwarding my resume for your review and consideration should a ____ (position) _____ with ____ (company name) _____ become available.

Closing for Cover Letters

- ❑ I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss my experience and abilities in greater detail. I am available for an interview at your earliest convenience. I can be reached at _____.
- ❑ I believe my background provides the skills required for this position. I would welcome the opportunity for an interview to further discuss my qualifications. I can be reached at _____.
- ❑ I believe I am qualified for this position and would like the opportunity to meet with you to explore how I may be of value to ____ (company) _____. I can be reached at _____.

