What’s your story?

How to write a cover letter that gets results.
Hello!

I am Sara Kies
UNIBusiness Marketing and Communications Manager.
My job is to persuade.
In this course

YOU WILL LEARN
• How to deconstruct the help wanted ad and match your skills to the requirements
• How to format your letter
• How to humanize your letter
• How to sell yourself on paper

WHAT YOU WILL NOT LEARN
• Proper grammar, spelling, punctuation because that is expected
• Where and how to find a job
• How to format a résumé
Before we get started...

Let me debunk a few myths about cover letters.
The cover letter is obsolete. People don’t read them.

Don’t assume companies do not read or want a cover letter. If they request one, include it. If they don’t request one, include it.
The cover letter summarizes your résumé.

Your cover letter should draw attention to your strengths through storytelling.
Meet Sally.

• Senior marketing major
• President of AMA
• Marketing intern at Humane Society
• Cashier at Fareway
Sally found the perfect job.

FeelGood Industries, a local non-profit devoted to increasing the physical well being of senior citizens, is looking to add a Marketing Assistant/Coordinator to our team. The successful candidate will assist the Director of Marketing with marketing-related tasks, maintain and update the editorial content calendar and attend photo shoots as needed. This position requires the ability to manage a marketing campaign, budget planning and Microsoft Excel experience. Please direct all communications and inquiries to Janelle Larson.
Step 1

Research the company

It’s good to have some background on the company before you sit down to write. Can you speak to any details from the About Us page on the company website that relates to your experience? Identify what skills would align with the company.
Step 2
Deconstruct the ad.
Highlight all of the requirements and keywords that you COULD include in your cover letter.

FeelGood Industries, a local non-profit devoted to increasing the physical well being of senior citizens, is looking to add a Marketing Assistant/Coordinator to our team. The successful candidate will assist the Director of Marketing with marketing-related tasks, maintain and update the editorial content calendar and attend photo shoots as needed. This position requires the ability to manage a marketing campaign, budget planning and Microsoft Excel experience. Please direct all communications and inquiries to Janelle Larson.
Step 3

Create list of requirements

Create the list of requirements that can be included in the cover letter. Notice CAN BE included. Do not include everything in your cover letter - save it for your résumé.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

- the ability to manage a marketing campaign
- budget planning
- Microsoft Excel experience.

JOB-RELATED TASKS

- maintain and update the editorial content calendar
- attend photo shoots
Step 4
Insert relevant experience

Add related experience under each requirement to be used later.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

- the ability to manage a campaign
  - Created Paw Prints campaign including budget, planned spend and content creation
- budget planning
- Microsoft Excel experience.
  - Microsoft Excel certified

JOB-RELATED TASKS

- maintain and update the editorial content calendar
  - Developed a content calendar for Paw Prints campaign and Humane Society marketing
- attend photo shoots
How to write a Cover Letter

July 1, 2016

Dear Hiring Manager:

As a self-motivated individual that is very passionate the NHL, I am excited to see that the Oilers are looking to hire someone into a coaching position. Therefore, I am writing to apply for the coaching position that is posted on the Oilers website. In April of this year I graduated with a BSc degree in NHL at the University of Alberta. I am confident that with my educational background and hockey experience, that I am the right person to work for your company.

This past year I was given a firsthand experience in a post graduate career as a Coach at the Calgary Flames, working at the Calgary arena for 8 months. My responsibilities included coaching a weak team named the Calgary Flames as well as learning how to skate myself. My hobbies include watching the Oilers beat the Flames as well as dancing with the stars.
Setting up the format and outline

Cover letters should follow the same general format. No photos of yourself. White smooth paper is fine.
Setting up the format and outline

Cover letters should follow the same general format.
NO PHOTOS OF YOURSELF.
White smooth paper is fine.
August 27, 2018

Janelle Larson
Marketing Director
Flexwood Industries
1111 Hoebestank Avenue
Waterloo, IA 50701

Dear Ms. Larson:

Purpose/Introduction Paragraph: Start with a personalized “you” introduction, and then move quickly to your purpose. If you wish to apply for a job, indicate the exact position for which you are applying. Use any job codes and the exact title listed in the ad. It is appropriate to mention where you learned about the position, especially if it was from a personal contact rather than a public announcement.

Information Paragraph #1: State exactly how you meet the posted job requirements. Doing this with bullet points can make your qualifications clear:

- Respond specifically to each of minimum requirements in the same order as listed.
- Use the same terminology used on the job description.
- If you do lack the exact skills, describe your alternative training or experience.

Information Paragraph #2: Provide a short summary of your special skills or characteristics, showing how your background additionally qualifies you for this position. This paragraph might feature special accomplishments in areas mentioned in the job announcement or qualifications that would not be expected of the average applicant. A candidate will often use the same third paragraph in virtually every cover letter since any prospective employer would probably appreciate these positive traits.

Action Paragraph: Clearly state your intended action or expectations in the job search process. You might promise a follow-up phone call, for instance, and employers generally find a proactive attitude desirable. Otherwise, summarize your expectations of the employer’s next step, perhaps with some information about how or when to best contact you.

Sincerely, [an appropriate alternative]

Sally Smith
The header

Use the CORRECT address. “To Whom it May Concern” “Mrs.” “Ms.” “Miss” use with caution!
Find name of the hiring manager. Google. Call the company.

If you do find the name, spell the name correctly.

If no name is found use “Dear Hiring Manager”

Know for sure before using Ms. or Mr.
The purpose paragraph

- Indicate the position in which you are applying and how you learned about the position
- Don't introduce yourself: "My name is Sara Kies..."
Information paragraph

This is the make or break section of your cover letter. This is where you shine.

- Include required experience from the ad description
- Don't state you “have the experience.” Prove it.
- Align any company-related research with your experience
- Bullets are okay but use them correctly
Call to action & closing

- Mention how to get in touch with you
- Sign the letter! It adds another level of personalization
Putting it all together.
**JOB REQUIREMENTS**

- the ability to manage a campaign
  - Created Paw Prints campaign including budget, planned spend and content creation
- budget planning
- Microsoft Excel experience.
  - Microsoft Excel certified

**JOB-RELATED TASKS**

- maintain and update the editorial content calendar
  - Developed a content calendar for Paw Prints campaign and Humane Society marketing
- attend photo shoots
Purpose paragraph.

What is the purpose of your letter?

As a graduating senior from the University of Northern Iowa, I was excited to discover your February 10th posting on jobs.com for a marketing coordinator at FeelGood Industries.

This is fine. But it could be better....
A passion for purpose is a key attribute of anyone who works for a nonprofit organization. After spending two years as a marketing intern at the Humane Society of the Cedar Valley, I realized that my purpose is to make a difference. For this reason, I was excited to discover your February 10th posting on jobs.com for a marketing coordinator at FeelGood Industries.

Storytelling creates a natural hook.
The level of professionalism I bring to this position is directly tied to my experiences as a student organization president and time at the Humane Society of the Cedar Valley.

- I have managed major marketing campaigns for both the Humane Society of the Cedar Valley and UNI’s American Marketing Association student chapter. In both positions, I had great success in generating interest, interaction and funding through integrated marketing and communications strategies.

- In March of 2018, I was instrumental in the conception and launch of Paw Prints, a pilot program designed to increase awareness about the life of shelter animals. The campaign yielded a 20 percent increase in social engagement and raised an additional $10 thousand in donations.
Additionally, the Microsoft Excel Certification I earned through UNIBusiness’ Professional Readiness Program gave me a deeper understanding of how to use the program to calculate various metrics including, conversion rates and return on investment. This understanding will greatly influence my work in coordinating the marketing efforts at FeelGood Industries.
You need a professional who understands non-profit marketing and the drive to hit the ground running. Please contact me via phone or email to discuss how I can help you grow FeelGood Industries. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sally Smith
Let’s try it!
Don’t forget!

- Match yourself to the job requirements
- Sell yourself - what can you do for them
- Don’t tell, demonstrate your experience and knowledge through story-telling
- Create a fresh cover letter for each position
Want this presentation?

Check out the new online STUDENT HUB
http://students.business.uni.edu
Thanks!

Any questions?

You can find me at sara.kies@uni.edu