A background image showing two men in suits engaged in a conversation. The man on the left is in the foreground, looking towards the right. The man on the right is in profile, looking towards the left. The image has a green tint.

The Isenberg Cover Letter

A How-to Guide for Undergraduate Students

A well-written cover letter is an essential part of your career toolkit. A cover letter makes a clear, singular argument: why an employer should hire you. This argument is captured in the story you share about how you can add value for that employer. Use the details and strategies in this guide to help you communicate your story with impact and influence!

GET STARTED

What's Your Value Proposition?

A value proposition refers to the benefits a company promises to deliver to customers. Your value proposition is a statement of the knowledge, skills, experience, passion, values, and commitment you'll bring to your target opportunity. In short, it's a clear statement of what you have to offer.

Your Value Proposition and the Cover Letter

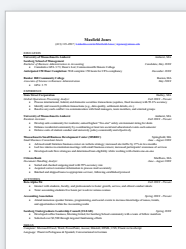
What's the connection between a value proposition and a cover letter? Your resume provides a comprehensive overview of your skills and experiences. Readers can only assume why these experiences are highlights for you and what these experiences reveal about your character and personality. Use your cover letter to help readers more fully understand how you have added value in the past and how you intend to do so in the future.

When we think of cover letters, we often emphasize form (e.g., margins, font size and styles, line spacing), not function. A cover letter needs to look the part, but in our eagerness to follow the correct form, we forget about function. We forget that the argument – the “pitch” – is the primary function. Our cover letters can become simply summaries of our resumes. The two – form and function – must join together to create a compelling argument for our candidacy.

Communicating Your Value

To help you communicate your value in your cover letter story, use [this tool](#) to help you identify the connection between your experiences and your values. Allow yourself to brag a bit. Why are you so proud of a particular experience? What do you think this pride reflects about you?

Identifying Your Value



Your **Isenberg resume** captures **experiences** that required you to use a range of **skills** to accomplish tasks. **Measureable results** help show that these experiences were successful.



Your **cover letter** tells a story that uses these details to share **why you're proud** of these experiences and what they **reveal about you**.



| Experience | Skills | Measurables | Braggables | Values |
|------------|--------|-------------|------------|--------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

| Value Proposition | Writing & Language | Structure | Formatting | Resources |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| | Align Your Story with Job Posts | | | |
| | Cover Letter as a Writing Sample | | | |
| | Writing with Flow and Coherence | | | |
| | Tone and Word Choice | | | |
| | Proofreading | | | |

Aligning Your Story with Job Posts

To determine an employer’s needs, you must carefully read and analyze job posts. This process requires you to identify your reader’s needs and align the story you will develop with those needs. Your story will include experiences that demonstrate your skills, achievements, and values.

Identifying the Reader’s Needs

A job post will often include a wide range of desired qualifications. Think of skills and competencies as one category of qualifications, and related experiences as another category. A third category is values and attributes. Select those qualifications that speak to you and group them separately. Begin to explore what experiences from your story you’ll use to make your pitch in your cover letter.

| Skills & Competencies | Related Experiences | Values & Attributes |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| market research | work in diverse environments | team-oriented |
| social media planning | leadership roles or team leads | visionary |
| project management | | innovative |
| B2B marketing skills | | open-minded initiative |

Aligning Your Story and the Reader’s Needs

To determine how to tailor your cover letter for a specific job post, identify experiences from your own story that match qualifications of interest to your reader. You won’t be able to include all your experiences in your cover letter. The goal is to identify experiences that most closely align with your reader’s needs.

| Experience | Skills | Measurables | Braggables | Values |
|--|-----------------------|--|---|---|
| Summer marketing internship with ABC, Inc. (mobile service provider) | Video production | Produced 26 product advertisement videos presently featured on company website | I was a central voice in decision making with respect to advertisement production and placement | Taking on new responsibilities that challenge me to learn beyond my current expertise |
| | Social media planning | | | |
| | Industry research | | | |



ASK THE ISENBERG EXPERTS!

QUESTION: Must I write a completely different letter for each job post?

ANSWER: No. Many cover letters you send could have similar—if not identical—sentences or sections at times. However, do not send out generic cover letters. Readers can easily pick these letters out, and you greatly lower your chances for follow-up. Instead, tailor your letter to your specific reader and that reader’s needs.

| Value Proposition | Writing & Language | Structure | Formatting | Resources |
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| | Proofreading | | | |

Your Cover Letter as a Writing Sample

“Excellent writing skills.” Many job candidates include this phrase on their resumes. How can a recruiter determine if a job candidate possesses these skills? The cover letter provides proof, and employers will use it to determine if candidates have the writing skills they are looking for.

Cover letter writers must make a wide range of choices: from arrangement strategies and speaking points to word choice and visual layout. Before you draft your cover letter, take a moment to stop and consider the choices you’ll make as a writer. Make them strategic. Leave nothing to chance.

Audience, Purpose, and Use

Pay attention to these key drivers as you prepare your cover letters:



Audience: A cover letter should be written with a specific reader in mind. A job post includes a specific set of reader needs, and your job is to make a pitch that responds to those needs.



Purpose: If your cover letter succeeds, you’ll be contacted for an interview. A strategic, well-written argument increases your chances that you’ll get the response you want.



Use: Your reader will use your letter to assess your writing skills and gain a sense of your personality. Your reader will also learn more about your story, as captured in the experiences and values you share.

Impact and Influence

A cover letter is not a formality; busy professionals wouldn’t waste their time asking for them were that the case. A cover letter does something a resume can’t: it tells a story with impact and influence. Your resume describes your skills and experiences, but your cover letter shares with readers why those experiences matter and what they reveal about you. Set yourself apart from the competition by conveying your professional personality. You want to become knowable—before you even meet. If your story is compelling, readers will be eager to arrange for the next important step: the interview.



Writing with Flow and Coherence

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

You’ve made your argument. Now you want your cover letter to read smoothly and clearly. Use these guidelines to improve your letter’s readability.

Remember, you’re making a pitch for yourself as a job candidate. Readers want well-qualified candidates, which includes an ability to write well. Your cover letter is direct evidence of your writing style.

Paragraph Unity

Use claims as topic sentences in your body paragraphs. A claim is a completed, persuasive statement that establishes a clear focus for a paragraph. Readers should quickly understand the direction of your paragraph, and a claim previews the supporting evidence you’ll use to prove your claim. You achieve paragraph unity when all sentences in a paragraph support the singular claim you captured in your topic sentence.

| Weak Claim | Strong Claim |
|--|--|
| Last summer, I completed an internship with Motorola. | My internship with Motorola gave me invaluable experience in B2B marketing research. |
| I have many strengths that qualify me for this position. | Because of my numerous leadership roles on campus, I have developed strong presentation skills that would help me succeed in this customer service position. |

PRO TIP

Well-written paragraphs make your cover letters more accessible. Readers appreciate this high skim value. Think shorter, focused paragraphs to accommodate your readers. See the [Sample Cover Letters](#) for examples of strong paragraph unity.



ASK THE ISENBERG EXPERTS!

QUESTION: I always thought that paragraphs must be 4-6 sentences long. Is that true for cover letters?

ANSWER: You may remember those types of guidelines from other writing courses, and they can be useful. Readers are unlikely to read lengthy paragraphs. However, be sure that your paragraphs have strong unity. Use strong, consistent claims for topic sentences and support only those claims to make your cover letter’s body paragraphs shine.



Writing with Flow and Coherence

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

Transitions

Use [transitions](#) to connect your ideas within your cover letter paragraphs. Transitions highlight relationships from sentence to sentence as you share your story with your reader. Readers who can follow these relationships clearly find writing more accessible and easier to follow. Without these transitions, your writing can become choppy. Use transitions to generate “flow.”

Avoid vague pronouns (e.g., this, that, these, those) as you transition from one sentence to the next in your paragraphs. Make your relationships as clear as possible for your readers.

You are the hero of your cover letter story. It makes sense that you’ll begin many sentences with “I.” Be careful, however. You can easily slip into an “I-initial” writing style in cover letters. As a result, your writing can become quite choppy. The solution? Use transitions to help minimize that choppiness.



| Vague Pronouns | Stronger Transitions |
|--|---|
| I completed industry research for senior managers and outlined a social media plan designed to boost online engagement. Because of this , I became a central voice in decision making regarding advertisements and product development. | I completed industry research for senior managers and outlined a social media plan designed to boost online engagement. Because of my successful performance , I became a central voice in decision making regarding advertisements and product development. |
| Thanks to this internship, I gained a much firmer grasp of emerging consumer trends with respect to food service. This will allow me to help Unilever target new markets and drive growth. | Thanks to this internship, I gained a much firmer grasp of emerging consumer trends with respect to food service. This know-how will allow me to help Unilever target new markets and drive growth. |

PRO TIP

Use strong action verbs to express your ideas in cover letters. Verbs add life to your writing. See the [Sample Cover Letters](#) for examples of paragraphs with flow and pace.

Align Your Story with Job Posts

Cover Letter as a Writing Sample

Writing with Flow and Coherence

Tone and Word Choice

Proofreading

Tone & Word Choice

You're confident that your argument will influence readers, but does your word choice help you make the strongest pitch possible to readers? Use these guidelines to keep your argument reader-centered.

"You Attitude" & Reader Benefits

A strong cover letter tells a compelling story, and a reader-based tone transforms that story into a compelling argument. When you write with "you attitude," you write with the reader in mind. You make sure to share with readers not simply what you can offer or what you have accomplished, but how your reader benefits. A sentence written with "you attitude" helps your reader answer a pivotal question in cover letters: "What's in it for me?" Sentences with "you attitude" work especially well to finish body paragraphs, as the writers of these [Sample Cover Letters](#) demonstrate.

Diction

Proper word choice improves the tone in cover letters. Use plain, direct language to express your ideas instead of jargon and buzzwords. Especially avoid clichés; these tired phrases reflect tired thinking and weaken your impression. Are you a "team player?" Capture the idea plainly: you "collaborate well." Do you "think outside the box?" Go with "think creatively." Say what you mean. Avoid the clichés.

Personalize sentences in your cover letter to create a more persuasive tone. Instead of writing "I admire your company's commitment to social responsibility," consider "I admire Microsoft's commitment to social responsibility." Be careful, however. When you prepare your cover letter for a new reader, you must revise personalized sentences. If you forget, you make a poor impression and risk embarrassment.



| Value Proposition | Writing & Language | Structure | Formatting | Resources |
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| | Tone and Word Choice | | | |
| | Proofreading | | | |

Proofreading

You have written a persuasive, compelling story to share with your readers. Before you make your pitch, make sure to proofread your cover letters carefully. A cover letter free of surface errors shows professionalism and increases your chances of getting the follow-up you want.

Typos, Errors, & Inconsistencies

Your cover letter must be error-free. An error-free cover letter sends readers a powerful, positive preview of the writing you’ll produce in the workplace. Readers want to focus on your story, not on distracting typos, errors, and inconsistencies. If these distractions pile up, readers may assume you’re careless, rushed, or simply unable to produce error-free writing. As a result, readers might conclude that your messages to future clients and customers will represent their organizations poorly. Remember, your cover letter is a writing sample. Make sure your writing reflects your best professional self. Proofread carefully to make an optimal impression.

Spell-check and autocorrect tools are highly useful proofreading tools—to an extent. These tools can identify most surface errors in your cover letter, but missing or incorrect words may remain. Use these tools to help you proofread your cover letter. However, you should always read your cover letter yourself before you send.

Punctuation

| Item | Comment |
|----------------|--|
| Hyphens | Joins two or more words to form compound adjectives (e.g., full-time position, short-term goals). |
| En dashes | Signals a partnership or pairing (e.g., the Patriots–Eagles game) or expresses a range of information (e.g., 2–3 weeks). |
| Em dashes | Sets apart phrases for emphasis (e.g., Directly buying such properties—rather than investing in shares—makes us unique.). |
| Proper nouns | Capitalize names of titles (e.g., President Smith), organizations (e.g., Aetna, Marketing Club), and geographic regions (e.g., Northeast territory). Do not capitalize majors (e.g., sports management major). |
| Apostrophes | Indicates possession in singular (e.g., company’s agreement) or plural (e.g., companies’ agreement) case. Avoid in plural constructions of numbers (e.g., 2010s) and abbreviations (e.g., MBAs). |
| Use of numbers | Avoid expressing numbers as digits in sentence-initial position (e.g., Twelve employees spoke at length.). Spell out all numbers less than 10. |

PRO TIP

Even if words are spelled correctly in your cover letter, you still may be using the incorrect version of a word. See [“Proofreading 101: Commonly Misused Words”](#) to review frequent spelling errors that you want to avoid.

Setting the Stage: *Opening Paragraph*

The **opening paragraph** of your cover letter is critical. You immediately want to let your reader know who you are, how you found out about the position, and why you're interested in the position.

You also want to capture this information briefly. Limit your opening paragraph to a few sentences, as modeled in these [Sample Cover Letters](#).

Situation and Purpose

Quickly let your reader know how you discovered the job post or position. Be as specific as possible. If you found the post on a Chase Career Center resource (e.g., Handshake), let the reader know. If you spoke with a company representative at a career fair to learn more about the position, include that detail. Your reader wants a clear sense of the situation up front in your cover letter. In larger companies, job posts frequently include requisition IDs in job posts; list that information for your reader's benefit.

Your reader also wants to know about you: your major, your anticipated year of graduation, and your availability for work. Finally, share with your reader why you are interested in the position.

PRO TIP

See [Sample Cover Letters](#) for examples of how to properly introduce yourself as an Isenberg student in the opening paragraph of your cover letter. Never assume that readers know that you're a UMass student when you write "Isenberg" or "ISOM."

Forecasting

To finish your opening paragraph, include a forecasting sentence that previews the pitch you'll make in your cover letter. What are your major qualifications for the position: your prior work experience? specific skill sets? These qualifications will be different for each writer. A forecasting sentence should give your reader a sneak preview of your argument to follow.



ASK THE ISENBERG EXPERTS!

QUESTION: The opening paragraph of a cover letter is like an essay introduction, right?

ANSWER: No. True, the opening paragraph of your cover letter introduces you as a job candidate. However, the opening paragraph should be briefer than other portions of your cover letter. Unlike an essay introduction, your cover letter introduction follows a different set of rules or "moves": think *situation*, *purpose*, and *forecasting*.

Making the Sell: *The Body Paragraphs*

PAGE 1

[PAGE 2](#)

The **body** of your cover letter contains your “pitch,” a chance to show how your skills, experiences, and interests make you a strong candidate for a position. You will need to identify your major qualifications and convince your reader to take that next step: arrange for an interview.

Think of your argument as a story. To create a story with impact and influence, use strategies in this section to organize and present your ideas:

- 1 “Sell-Sell” Strategy
- 2 “Hook-Homework” Strategy
- 3 “S.T.A.R” Strategy

“Sell-Sell” Strategy

A “[sell-sell](#)” cover letter requires you to select two major qualifications and write a paragraph for each. Examples of qualifications may include an experience (e.g., internship), a skill (e.g., social media planning), or a set of related experiences (e.g., campus leadership roles). Make sure that each body paragraph has a singular focus.

The qualifications you select for each of your “sell-sell” body paragraphs should reflect your critical analysis of the job post. You may use the same qualifications across many cover letters you write, but not always. Use the [Identifying Your Value](#) chart to capture highlights from your resume that you might include as qualifications in a “sell-sell” cover letter. This chart can also help you understand why you select the qualifications that you do.

Do Your Research

Review a company’s website, press releases, mission and vision statements, employee profiles, financial performance—really, any information you can obtain. Take careful notes so you can add details to your “homework” paragraph.

“Hook-Homework” Strategy

A “[hook-homework](#)” cover letter is a little less conventional. However, you can still make a powerful pitch with this strategy. As with a “sell-sell” cover letter, this strategy consists of two paragraphs:

- In your “hook” paragraph, you combine all of your major qualifications into a single paragraph. The challenge? You won’t be able to include that much detail. Avoid turning this paragraph into a lengthy list of reasons why you’re a solid fit for the job.
- In your “homework” paragraph, you prove that you understand the company, the requirements for the job, and your fit for the position. A successful “homework” paragraph requires you to research the company carefully. Avoid general praise for the company. Show that you clearly understand the company’s values and culture, and why you’re attracted to the company.

PRO TIP

A cover letter that shows alignment between a writer’s and reader’s values makes for a strong story. See this [Sample Cover Letter](#) for an example of a “hook-homework” cover letter.

Making the Sell: *The Body Paragraphs*

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

"S.T.A.R." Strategy

Do you have a particular "episode" from your life—a shining moment from an internship, say, or a special academic achievement—that stands out for you? Does this episode reveal something about who you are that would persuade your reader? Consider a S.T.A.R. paragraph as a creative substitute for a paragraph in a "sell-sell" cover letter. You could also substitute a S.T.A.R. paragraph for the "hook" in a "hook-homework" cover letter. See this [Sample Cover Letter](#) as an example.

S.T.A.R. paragraphs follow a specific structure:

- Establish the **Situation**, which includes your role and the background for your example;
- Describe the **Task** or problem you needed to address in this situation;
- Explain the **Action** you took to manage the task or problem successfully;
- Discuss the **Result** of your action and how that action produced value for others.

Each S.T.A.R. element should be captured in no more than one sentence. You can even combine a few S.T.A.R. elements in a single sentence. Remember, your S.T.A.R. is a one paragraph substitute for either a "sell" or "hook" paragraph in a cover letter. Your cover letter strategy could fit any of these categories:

"Sell-Sell"

"Hook-Homework"

"Sell-S.T.A.R."

"S.T.A.R.-Homework"



ASK THE ISENBERG EXPERTS!

QUESTION: May I write more than two body paragraphs in the body of my cover letter?

ANSWER: We recommend two body paragraphs, so your letter fills roughly 3/4 of the page. Think of these paragraphs as a "highlights reel:" you can't—and shouldn't—write about everything on your resume. Under no circumstances should your cover letter exceed one page.

The "S.T.A.R." strategy can even be used to prove how you tackled a problem or challenge successfully outside of work or school. This approach is less conventional; think carefully about why you might choose this type of episode to build your argument. If the episode reveals your resiliency, you might consider this approach.

Inspiring a Response: *The Close*

The **close** of your cover letter will sound very similar for each letter you write. Keep it brief: a few sentences will get the job done.

Make sure that your close is a separate paragraph. Doing so helps isolate key information for readers who wish to contact you to arrange an interview. The best way to inspire a response? Express a final thought of **goodwill** and make **future action** clear, as writers of these [Sample Cover Letters](#) demonstrate.

- **Goodwill** – Readers of cover letters are busy professionals. Thank your reader for taking the time to read your cover letter. You may also choose to remind your reader briefly—in no more than one sentence—why you’re an excellent candidate for the position. Instead, you may choose to share with your reader what you find attractive about the position or organization.
- **Future Action** – In your close, you should help your reader answer a key question: “What happens next?” Of course, your primary purpose in writing a cover letter is to receive an interview request. To accommodate your reader, provide your contact information. As a professional courtesy, also invite your reader to contact you should the reader have any additional questions of you before a possible interview is scheduled.

PRO TIP

Maintain an optimal persuasive tone to the very end of your cover letter. Avoid expressions like “I’m anxious to discuss this position further.” **Eager** suggests excitement, and **anxious** suggests apprehension.



ASK THE ISENBERG EXPERTS!

QUESTION: The closing paragraph of a cover letter is like a closing paragraph in an essay, right?

ANSWER: No. Avoid any unnecessary recap or summary of your story. Your reader does not require the summary. Instead, thank your reader, focus on next steps, and provide your contact information. For additional examples, refer to the [Sample Cover Letters](#).



Formatting Your Cover Letter

Your cover letter should conform to full block format. Although other cover letter formats exist, full block format is the easiest to use, for you never indent any text. Be sure to avoid cover letter templates. For additional examples of proper format, refer to the [Sample Cover Letters](#).

Note: A letterhead is optional and should only include a writer's name, email, and phone number.

Use standard monthly format for date (e.g., September 12, 2020)

Include address if listed in job posting

For the salutation, use name – first and last – followed by a comma; if no name is given, use “Hiring Manager”

Add a space between all blocks of text

For the complimentary close, use a common, suitable phrase (e.g., “Sincerely”), followed by a comma

Add one line space after the close and insert the typed name with no signature (as shown here), or add 3-4 line spaces between the closing and the typed name and insert an image file of the signature

Note: It is generally not recommended that writers include contact information below the signature or make reference to attachments.

September 12, 2020

Hiring Manager
Staples, Inc.
500 Staples Drive
Franklin, NJ 07033

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the Marketing Internship posted on the Handshake platform. I am a junior Marketing major at the University of Maryland at College Park, where I am also a student at the Honors College. My most recent internship was a paid position at Staples as a retail sales assistant and HR trainee, where I gained valuable experience in customer service and sales.

Last semester, I worked as a marketing intern for One RN, Inc., a global provider of online services. Throughout my internship, I utilized Microsoft Word and PowerPoint to produce professional documents and presentations. Additionally, I completed a research project on the impact of social media on the retail industry, which I presented at a conference. I am confident that my skills and experience make me a strong candidate for this position.


As I did not see any other openings, I am writing to you as a last resort. I am a hard worker and a team player. I am confident that I can contribute to your organization and grow with your company. I am open to any feedback and would be happy to discuss my qualifications further.

My internship experience and the results of my research and analysis are attached to this email. I am confident that I can contribute to your organization and grow with your company. I am open to any feedback and would be happy to discuss my qualifications further.

Sincerely,

Michael Jones

Document Design

| Item | Comment |
|---------------|--|
| Margins | Use 1.0" standard margins on all sides. |
| Fonts | Select readable serifs (e.g., Times New Roman, Georgia, Garamond) or sans serifs (e.g., Calibri, Arial, Tahoma). |
| Point size | Use 11-12 point for main text. |
| Justification | Choose left justification to create a “flush left, ragged right” document.  |



ASK THE ISENBERG EXPERTS!

QUESTION: I'm unsure of my reader's title (e.g., Ms., Mrs.). How should I handle that situation?

ANSWER: Avoid using titles unless specifically given in the posting. In the salutation, use both first and last names if no title is given. Also, only use specific job titles (e.g., Director of Human Resources) if they are listed in the posting.

Putting It All Together

Identifying Your Values

Transitions

Proofreading 101

Sample #1

Sample #2

Sample #3

RESOURCES

Putting It All Together

Use standard monthly format for date.

September 12, 2020

Use "Hiring Manager" if no name given.

Hiring Manager
Staples, Inc.
500 Staples Drive
Framingham, MA 01702

Use readable serifs (e.g., Times New Roman, Georgia, Garamond) or sans serifs (e.g., Calibri, Arial, Tahoma) in 11 or 12 point.

Dear Hiring Manager,

Writer establishes situation (e.g., student status & major) and purpose (e.g., interest in position) in opening paragraph.

Writer forecasts focus of argument to follow.

I am writing to apply for the Marketing Internship at Staples, Inc. I am a junior marketing major in the Isenberg School of Management at UMass Amherst, where I am also a student in the Honors College. My recent marketing internship has prepared me to create and publish social media content and work with content and HR teams, tasks expected of Staples interns. This internship, as well as my leadership roles at UMass, have prepared me well to succeed in this Staples Marketing Internship.

• Write clear & concise content
• Do not use articles (i.e., "a," "an," "the")
• Do not use periods at the end of bullets

Clear focus established in "sell" paragraph.

Last summer, I worked as a marketing intern for OnePIN, Inc., a global e-commerce services. Throughout my internship, I utilized iMovie and FinalCutPro to produce advertisement videos featured on the company website; I created these videos in English for OnePIN's global market. Additionally, I completed industry research for senior managers and outlined a social media plan designed to boost online engagement. Because of my successful performance, I became a central voice in decision-making for advertisements and product development. This internship taught me how to engage with company executives in all departments, and I am prepared to engage equally well with senior leaders at Staples on similar type of assignments.

Transitions link ideas to improve flow.

Transitions link ideas to improve flow.

"You attitude" (i.e., reader benefits) strengthens argument.

Clear focus shift introduces new "sell" paragraph.

As I did in my internship, I have demonstrated strong leadership as a UMass student. In addition to working two jobs on campus, I presently serve as Risk Manager for the Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority. In this role, I ensure that all Tri Sigma social media reflects our values and showcases our achievements. I have become especially skillful at vetting social media posts for content and examining our social media presence objectively, so our sorority makes a positive, public impression. Values count, and you can depend on me to help promote Staples' core values with a positive online presence.

Evidence to support claim ("strong leadership") stated in topic sentence of this "sell" paragraph.

Brief goodwill included for persuasive tone in close.

My internship experience and demonstrated leadership would make me an asset to the Staples team. I am especially eager to intern for a company that values sustainability and the lives of its employees. I look forward to discussing this position further at your convenience. Please contact me at mjones@umass.edu or at 413-123-4567 with any questions in the meantime. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Common, appropriate phrase used (e.g., "Sincerely," "Yours truly"), followed by a comma.

Future action is clear; contact information is provided.

Michelle Jones

(a) Add one line space after the close and insert the typed name with no signature (as shown here);
or
(b) Add 3-4 line spaces between the closing and the typed name and insert an image file of the signature.

Identifying Your Values: *An Exploratory Tool*

[illegible]

September 10, 2016

Journal Name:
Journal Title:
Volume:
Issue:
Page(s):

Author Name:

Abstract:

Introduction:

Conclusions:

References:

Keywords:

Additional Information:

15

RESOURCES

Transitions

| Linking Ideas | | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| in addition | again | further |
| moreover | too | next |
| and | likewise | last |
| and then | furthermore | in brief |
| besides | nor | |
| Emphasizing | | |
| surely | undoubtedly | in fact |
| certainly | indeed | without a doubt |
| to be sure | truly | |
| Examples | | |
| for example | as proof | to illustrate |
| for instance | specifically | in particular |
| Summarizing | | |
| finally | in short | thus |
| in conclusion | as shown | consequently |
| therefore | as stated | to sum up |
| as a result | in sum | accordingly |
| Results | | |
| as a result | since | therefore |
| thus | hence | consequently |
| because | accordingly | |

| Comparing Ideas | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| in the same way | in addition | equally |
| similarly | just as | like |
| likewise | each | both |
| furthermore | too | also |
| have in common | the same | |
| Contrasting Ideas | | |
| but | notwithstanding | in contrast |
| still | even though | otherwise |
| however | though | conversely |
| nevertheless | although | yet |
| on the contrary | on the other hand | while this may be true |
| after all | | |
| Results | | |
| first (second, etc.) | then | finally |
| | next | |
| Time | | |
| meanwhile | shortly | |

RESOURCES

Proofreading 101: *Commonly Misused Words*

| Words | Comment | Example |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| eager/anxious | Eager suggests excitement, and anxious suggests apprehension. | <i>I am eager to learn more about this position.</i> |
| affect/effect | Affect is to change or influence (verb). Effect is an outcome, result, or condition (noun). | <i>High overhead costs adversely affect profits; the long-term effect is concerning.</i> |
| fewer/less | Fewer refers to a specific or measurable number. Less refers to an abstract or unmeasurable amount. | <i>I felt less stress because I made fewer errors.</i> |
| number/amount | Number refers to items counted individually. Amount refers to quantities measured by degree. | <i>The amount of feedback we received was unexpected, especially the large number of emails.</i> |
| principle/principal | Principle is a rule or standard; principal is a primary individual (noun) or primary idea (adjective). | <i>Ms. Williams, a principal of Perkasio Inc., discussed important business principles.</i> |
| compliment/complement | Compliment indicates praise or a gift, and complement is something that completes or perfects. | <i>My internship experience nicely complements my academic studies.</i> |
| peak/pique | Peak is a high point (noun) or to reach a high point (verb); to poke (verb) is to arouse curiosity. | <i>My curiosity was piqued when the market peaked last week.</i> |
| insure/ensure | To insure is to protect against loss, especially financial loss; to ensure is to make certain. | <i>We ensured that employees pre-registered for the training.</i> |
| accept/except | Accept means to agree, and except means to exclude. | <i>I accept your proposal, except for two details.</i> |
| moral/morale | Moral refers to a lesson (noun) or virtuous behavior (adjective), and morale refers to motivation. | <i>Team morale rose after the unexpected win.</i> |
| rational/rationale | Rational means logical or sensible, and rationale refers to a set of reasons that support a claim. | <i>His rationale for pursuing this option seems rational.</i> |
| its/it's | Its is a possessive pronoun; it's is a contraction for "it is." | <i>It's amazing how quickly its impact was felt.</i> |
| your/you're | Your is a possessive adjective; you're is a contraction of "you are." | <i>You're likely to impress them with your long-term plan.</i> |

RESOURCES

Sample #1: *Sell-Sell Strategy*

September 12, 2021

Hiring Manager
Staples, Inc.
500 Staples Drive
Framingham, MA 01702

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the Marketing Internship posted on Handshake. I am a junior marketing major in the Isenberg School of Management at UMass Amherst, where I am also a student in the Honors College. My recent marketing internship has prepared me to create and publish social media content and work with content and HR teams, tasks expected of Staples interns. This internship, as well as my leadership roles at UMass, have prepared me well to succeed in this Staples Marketing Internship.

Last summer, I worked as a marketing intern for OnePIN, Inc., a global provider of mobile services. Throughout my internship, I utilized iMovie and FinalCutPro to produce 26 product advertisement videos featured on the company website; I created these videos in English and Turkish to cater to OnePIN's global market. Additionally, I completed industry research for senior managers and outlined a social media plan designed to boost online engagement. Because of my successful performance, I became a central voice in decision making regarding advertisements and product development. This internship taught me how to engage confidently with company executives in all departments, and I am prepared to engage equally well with senior leaders at Staples on similar type of assignments.

As I did in my internship, I have demonstrated strong leadership as a UMass student. In addition to working two jobs on campus, I presently serve as Risk Manager for the Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority. In this role, I ensure that all Tri Sigma social media reflects our values and showcases our achievements. I have become especially skillful at vetting social media posts for content and examining our social media presence objectively, so our sorority makes a positive, public impression. Values count, and you can depend on me to help promote Staples' core values with a positive online presence.

My internship experience and demonstrated leadership would make me an asset to the Staples team. I am especially eager to intern for a company that values sustainability and the lives of its employees. I look forward to discussing this position further at your convenience. Please contact me at mjones@umass.edu or at 413-123-4567 with any questions in the meantime. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michelle Jones

RESOURCES

Sample #2: *Sell-S.T.A.R. Strategy*

November 12, 2021

Hiring Manager
Unilever Food Solutions
700 Sylvan Ave
Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the Assistant Brand Manager (Req ID: R-21379) position listed on your company's online job board. I am a student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Isenberg School of Management, and I expect to graduate this May with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing. A UMass Commonwealth Honors College student, I offer Unilever a distinct blend of familiarity with global markets and insights into the retail food service space that makes me an excellent candidate for this position.

My 2019 internship in Brussels, Belgium with Caramel Publishing, a leading international book publisher, gave me invaluable experience and insight into B2B marketing in an international setting. My role required me to partner my creative and analytical skills to help my employer expand into emerging markets. For instance, one of my projects was to compose a marketing strategy to present to the Brussels Chamber of Commerce. For this project, I conducted market research and analyzed relevant consumer trends within the mass market of children's books. My work helped the company secure new shareholders, and I learned a great deal about marketing strategies particular to the international B2B consumer space. I am confident that this type of experience can help me develop and deliver competitive strategy for Unilever's global food service brands.

More recently, I interned with C&S Wholesale Grocers, which let me showcase my problem-solving skills in the dynamic food service space. As a Marketing intern for the Fresh Merchandising department, I created bakery and deli promotional materials designed to increase consumer sales in the company's Northeast retail division. As part of this process, I analyzed consumer trend reports and constructed an integrated communications plan for our food service vendors. My efforts proved so successful that management used my research to develop a more comprehensive, customer-end food service initiative. Thanks to this internship, I gained a much firmer grasp of the grocery industry, as well as emerging consumer trends with respect to food service. This know-how will allow me to help Unilever target new markets and drive growth.

Unilever's culture of integrity, respect, responsibility, and innovation speaks to me highly, and I welcome a chance to discuss how I may join this dynamic environment. In the meantime, if you have any questions of me, please feel free to contact me at (413) 123-4567 or mjones@umass.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration; I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Michelle Jones

RESOURCES

Sample #3: *Hook-Homework Strategy*

January 29, 2021

Pat Johnson
 Director, Recruitment & Development
 New England Aquarium (NEAQ)
 1 Central Wharf
 Boston, MA 02110

Dear Pat Johnson,

I first learned about your Volunteer Programming Internship from the NEAQ website. I was particularly impressed by NEAQ's commitment to environmental sustainability, and I knew immediately that I wanted to pursue this opportunity. As an accounting major in the Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, I actively pursue work that makes a difference, and I am delighted to express my interest in this position.

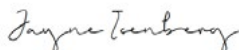
As a hardworking and caring individual, I would make a great fit for the culture that defines NEAQ. As a Co-Director of Operations for Isenberg Citizens First, a community service-based club at UMass, I not only inspire my peers to serve their community, but also collaborate with nonprofit organizations to plan events. As a Teaching Assistant for an undergraduate course in business leadership, I have also developed facilitation skills. Moreover, as a Disability Service Notetaker, I have volunteered my time on campus to improve my peers' learning experiences. Each of these roles demonstrates my passion for education and community service, both of which make me an ideal candidate for your team.

The educational experiences and positive interactions I have had at NEAQ throughout my life have shown me the sense of community and teamwork that defines your organization, thus attracting me to this position. My first visit to NEAQ was at the age of one; as I grew up, I learned how critically important environmental protections and sustainability are for our planet's future. What can I offer NEAQ? My passion. As a business student, I have made a commitment to bettering my community through corporate social responsibility, always seeking opportunities that will help me make the world a better place. I share NEAQ's values, and with this internship, I look forward to making a positive impact.

I would sincerely value the opportunity to meet with you and discuss my qualifications in greater detail. Should you have any questions or require any further information, please feel free to contact me at jayneisenberg@umass.edu or (617) 345-6789.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jayne Isenberg