



AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR FOREIGN STUDY GUIDELINES FOR WRITING COVER LETTERS AND RESUMES

Cover letters will accompany your resume and are designed to give the reader an insight into you, the type of individual you are, what motivates you, what your aspirations are. As such it is a perfect opportunity for you to present yourself in a very positive light to the employer. Remember this is your opportunity to stand out to your prospective employer long before they meet you.

Cover letters should have an opening paragraph, three or four paragraphs that build the reader's interest, and a closing paragraph. Sometimes it is difficult to know how to write a cover letter that is effective and professional. Hopefully the following will make the process a little easier!

Next step – what should I include in my cover letter?

It will be very helpful if you can focus on the following:

- Why have you chosen to participate in an internship program?
- What can you offer a prospective placement?
- What are you hoping to achieve from this Internship?
- What experience do you have in your chosen field?
- How can you apply your studies in a work setting?

Your letter should be clear and concise and should allow the reader an insight into your objectives and why they should consider you as an intern. Remember to keep the information relevant and do not refer to your resume. Your cover letter is an opportunity for you to expand on the information contained in your resume.

Presentation – what should my cover letter look like?

- Ensure that your cover letter is clear, concise and easy to read.
- Pay particular attention to the font that you use. You may like to consider using one and -a -half line spacing.
- Your cover letter should be no more than three paragraphs. Remember employers receive a lot of applications!
- Ensure that you have included your name at the top of the document.
- Closing paragraph – thanking the prospective placement for taking the time to read your letter.

Remember to stick to one page in length. When you finish your one-page masterpiece, give it to a couple of friends and ask for their first impressions and overall opinion.

Resume –what should I include?

Your resume plays a vital role in helping you to secure an interview. It is good practice to remember that securing an interview and placement is a highly competitive undertaking. Your resume should be structured in the following way;

- Personal details – name, address, telephone number and date of birth

- ❑ Education – state your degree and the university/college you are attending. State when you began your degree/course of study and your expected graduation date.
- ❑ Work Experience – State the name of your employer, location and brief description of your duties. Should always be in reverse chronological order.
- ❑ Computer/ IT skills and other abilities – state packages and level of competence. Also include any language skills and your level of competence.
- ❑ Extra-curricular activities – sport, voluntary work, leisure interests, etc.

All dates should appear on the left hand side of the page. Dates should not appear in number form. This will make your resume easier to read. In the UK specific dates should appear as:

Day/Month/Year, e.g. 22nd October 2011

Do not abbreviate state names, for instance, you should write California rather than CA.

SAMPLE RESUME

Amreen Kauser
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Manchester
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Telephone 0161 786 573
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My time in South America has caused me to rethink career goals. I am keen to work in the charity sector, particularly for an organisation that promotes the welfare of children. My aim is to use design and communication skills to raise awareness of issues in the developing world.

Key Skills

Ability to plan, organise and keep going when things get difficult
Increased awareness of other cultures and the effect of poverty on children
Experience of producing publicity material for a range of media
Competence with internet and web design software
Experience of marketing, advertising and conference organisation

Career History

October 2001- July 2002

Travelling and working in South America. Work undertaken was mainly teaching English at a school in Rio de Janeiro and involvement in international fund raising activities to equip the school with computers. This gave me additional insight into the value of public relations work.

1998-2000

Multimedia media designer, Crimson Graphics Manchester

Key features

Contributing to design of CDs, web sites, brochures and advertising material
Member of creative team of five designers and writers
Understanding of PR and marketing strategy
Tact, diplomacy and ability to deal with people at all levels
Working to tight deadlines

Qualifications**1998**

HND Media Technology. Leeds Metropolitan University

Key features

Development of multimedia authoring skills
Development of visual and written communication skills
Project on evaluating the impact of promotional material

1989 to 1996

Salford High School
A level Design and Spanish
7 GCSEs

Interests

Travel
Painting
Languages

References available on request.

GUIDELINES FOR THE AIFS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**Responsibilities the Student has to the Voluntary Internship Placement**

- To be punctual and dependable.
- To follow the instructions and guidelines of the particular placement.
- To inform placement at once if you are unable to attend.
- To maintain an open attitude that encourages a learning environment.

Responsibilities the Student has to AIFS

- To communicate promptly with AIFS Coordinator if student placement requires attention.
- To behave responsibly as a representative of your home campus and AIFS.

There are undoubtedly many advantages to be gained from participating in an internship. However one should bear in mind a number of considerations in relation to prospective internships.

An internship is a significant time commitment.

Be realistic – placements may not be replications of the ones you may have undertaken in the USA. You may find the approach in London to be less structured with less formal supervision. The less proactive you are the less responsibility you will be given – ask questions! Remember that you will be carrying out some mundane tasks initially but remember that if you do these well you may be given more responsibility!

If you require any further information about the AIFS Internship Program please contact:

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