

A cover letter is usually required if you're responding to a specific job opening, but you can also write a cover letter to request a studio visit, internship, or portfolio review.

A cover letter is usually sent with a resume and a link to your portfolio as part of a job or internship application. It may be sent as an email — or as a PDF attached to an email — or as a formally typed one-page letter in the mail. It's a persuasive letter that identifies who you are, your interest in the company, organization, or individual you're contacting, and your potential value as an employee.

It's important that your letters are tailored to each recipient and respond specifically to a job description or studio philosophy. Research the company, organization, or individual via their website, published interviews, online profiles, and through any mutual connections. It's imperative there are no spelling or grammar errors. Confirm that all the recipient's names are spelled correctly before sending.

LENGTH

Keep it brief. A cover letter is generally 3–4 short paragraphs. Aim for 2–4 sentences per paragraph. For printed letters, stay within $\frac{3}{4}$ page in length.

GREETING & TONE

Address your recipient as “Dear Ms. or Mr.” unless you know them personally. Avoid using informal language. Many company or organization websites have a staff directory: within a creative agency, it's usually the role of an Art Director or Creative Director to review potential hires. If a specific contact name is not readily available, call the company to ask for a point of contact along with their job title.

LETTER FOR A JOB POSTING

Paragraph 1

State your name and indicate that you're a student or recent graduate along with your major. Name the position you're interested in and how you found out about it. You can also state if you have any mutual connections, such as a faculty member or someone within the organization who recommended you apply for the position.

Paragraphs 2–3

Demonstrate your research. Explain why your skills and accomplishments align with the position qualifications. Use language that shows you have carefully read the job requirements when responding. Show enthusiasm for the individual or organization. You can compliment a specific example of work that you admire. You can also share a

specific experience from your resume or project of relevance to the position.

Final Paragraph

Reiterate your desire to connect. Include contact information and a link to your website.

LETTER FOR A INTERVIEW WITHOUT A JOB POSTING

Paragraph 1

State your name and indicate that you are a student or recent graduate along with your major. Name your interest in the recipient or organization and how you found out about them. You can also state if you have any mutual connections such as a faculty member or someone within the organization who recommended you connect.

Paragraphs 2–3

Inquire about meeting. You can also ask about a potential position, but note that this often works best for internships or assistantships since job openings are usually listed. Demonstrate your enthusiasm for the artist or company and your knowledge of their work. Briefly convey your skill level, one or two recent accomplishments, and your professional interests.

Final Paragraph

Reiterate your desire to connect. Include contact information and a link to your website. When scheduling an appointment, it's often helpful to give a window of availability, such as “the week of January 19”. If you are visiting a city to explore opportunities, mention that you are traveling and the dates you can meet.

FOLLOW-UP

Follow up one week to ten days later. Reiterate that you would be happy to meet in person to discuss this opportunity. If you don't hear back, expect that they don't have time or interest at this point. You can try to connect again once you have a new accomplishment or experience under your belt. It's never a good idea to show up at a potential place of employment without an appointment.

Contact Information

Header includes clear contact information. Greeting is addressed to specific person in the organization.

Overall Approach

A cover letter responding to a posted position that could be mailed or sent as a PDF.

Justin Desper

(207) 251-3173 Justindesper@gmail.com
Justindesper.com
Portland, ME

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

I am writing to you with interest in the assistant costume supervisor role available at the Playhouse this summer. As a native to Southern Maine I was excited to find a costuming close to home. I am a senior at Maine College of Art in their Textile and Fashion Design looking to take the next step in pursuit of a career in fashion and costume design. This is a challenging, but rewarding opportunity that I think my skillset would be well tailored for

Paragraph 1

Names the position you're applying for. Indicates background, location, and professional goals.

Throughout my time at MECA I have gained skills in pattern drafting, draping, machine and hand sewing, weaving, and machine knitting. In the fall of my Junior year I worked with several other students to design costumes for a Portland Ballet production of *Alice in Wonderland*. Through several years of river and sea kayak guide at a kayak rental store, I have developed strong leadership skills in most any hectic situation with a cool head.

Paragraph 2

Shares skills that align with the position. Describes relevant work examples.

I am looking forward to meeting you and discussing the possibilities of me assisting with costumes this summer.

Feel free to call me anytime at (207)251-3173 or email me at Justindesper@gmail.com. My portfolio can be seen on my website at Justindesper.com.

Thank you for your time,

Justin Desper

Paragraph 3

Reaffirms interest in the position, lists two points of contact and website. Closes with thank you.

COVER LETTER SAMPLE

Senior Year Student
BFA, Textile & Fashion
Design

Justin Desper

(207) 251-3173 Justindesper@gmail.com
Justindesper.com
Portland, ME

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

I am writing to you with interest in the assistant costume supervisor role available at the Ogunquit Playhouse this summer. As a native to Southern Maine I was excited to find a costuming opportunity so close to home. I am a senior at Maine College of Art in their Textile and Fashion Design program and I am looking to take the next step in pursuit of a career in fashion and costume design. This position sounds like a challenging, but rewarding opportunity that I think my skillset would be well tailored for.

Throughout my time at MECA I have gained skills in pattern drafting, draping, machine and hand sewing, weaving, and machine knitting. In the fall of my Junior year I worked with several other students to design and create costumes for a Portland Ballet production of *Alice in Wonderland*. Through several years of being a co-manager and sea kayak guide at a kayak rental store, I have developed strong leadership skills and can handle most any hectic situation with a cool head.

I look forward to meeting you and discussing the possibilities of me assisting with costumes this summer. Feel free to call me anytime at (207)251-3173 or email me at Justindesper@gmail.com. My portfolio can be seen on my website at Justindesper.com.

Thank you for your time,

Justin Desper