Cover Letter Writing

The following cover letter samples show two candidates with exactly the same education, qualifications and experience.

Ricardo Lopez has written a brief, standard cover letter listing his skills and experience, and tells the potential employer that he would be an asset to the organization.

Marla Brown has written a cover letter that introduces herself to the potential employer and describes her skills and experience. She also demonstrates her knowledge of the organization and shows the employer with examples how she would be an asset to that organization and a good fit for the position.

Look at both cover letters. Pretend you are an employer. You only have time to review one resumé. Based on your understanding of the candidates from their cover letters, whose resumé are you more interested in reading: Ricardo’s or Marla’s?

If you would like to know how to write a cover letter that gets an employer interested in reading your resumé, visit the Career Centre website to see the variety of supports and services available to help you create a cover letter that best showcases your talents, accomplishments and experience.

Further resources available at: www.yorku.ca/careers/handouts
Ricardo Lopez  
123 Narrow Road  
Toronto, ON  
M1M 2M3  
rlopez@e-mail.com  
(416) 123-1233  

May 6, 2013  

Dear Sir or Madam,  

I am writing to apply for a challenging full-time position in environmental management. I believe my skills, knowledge and experience would make me a perfect fit for your organization.

Here are some highlights of my qualifications:  

• Excellent communication, team work and interpersonal skills  
• Completion of a Bachelors of Environmental Studies (Honours) degree from York University with a GPA of 8.33 out of 9  
• Computer proficiency in MS Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access)  
• Effective multi-tasking and prioritizing skills  
• Extra-curricular involvement as the President of the Environmental Club at York  

I feel I can be a valuable asset to your organization, and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,  

Ricardo Lopez
May 6, 2013

Janet Montgomery
Project Manager, Oak Ridges Moraine Initiative
Regional Municipality of York
Newmarket, ON
N1M 2P3

Dear Ms. Montgomery,

When I first heard that the Oak Ridges Moraine Initiative was being acknowledged with provincial funding, I couldn’t help but feel a sense of pride that I had played even a small part in this turn of events. For the past 3 years I have studied, fund- raised and lobbied on behalf of the moraine while completing my Bachelor of Environmental Studies at York University, specializing in Environmental Management. I would love to continue to be a part of the efforts to promote the protection of this environmentally sensitive area as a Field Coordinator with the Oak Ridges Moraine Initiative.

As an Environmental Officer with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority last summer, I performed many of the functions of a field coordinator by ensuring a team of 12 consultants, scientists and students were able to carry out their work with the necessary permits, equipment and emergency gear. By accurately assessing supply needs and developing strong relationships with shippers, I avoided the delays that often interfere with finishing a project on time and on budget. I anticipated the involvement of the press and avoided inaccurate coverage by organizing regular ‘field days’ for reporters to visit the site and speak with the team. The resulting reportage was unequivocally favourable and unusually complete. At the end of the project, the Head Consultant commended me for the “smooth and flawless execution” of the project.

Throughout my degree, my grasp of industry-grade testing standards and protocols placed me in the 1st or 2nd percentile of every course covering this material. My honours thesis research project on the effects of residential construction on man-made water supplies was selected to be presented at the Regional Conference on Water Conservation this spring.

Beyond my coordination skills and scientific knowledge, my demonstrated ability to inspire and motivate teams, will provide an invaluable addition to support the project team’s success. I would be delighted to meet with you and elaborate on the details I have included in my resumé.

Sincerely,

Marla Brown

Marla Brown