

WILL D. CAT

800 E. Lancaster Avenue | Villanova, PA 19085 | 610-519-XXXX | student@villanova.edu

Date

To Name of Recruiter (or 'To the Hiring Manager' if the contact's name is unknown):

OPENING PARAGRAPH

- Be sure to address why you are writing and why you are interested in the role & company.
- Include brief background on yourself & state the exact position you are applying for and where you found it.
- It is important to read the company's mission statement and understand what about the organization/role is interesting to you. Connect the company's values/mission/work with your own career goals and values.
- If someone referred you to apply for the position, you may mention their name in this paragraph.

MIDDLE PARAGRAPH(S): This 1-2 paragraph section is critical!

- Ask yourself these questions as you outline your middle paragraphs:
 - How has your background prepared you for this position?
 - What experiences do you have that align with the job description and what you know about the company?
- Focus on 2-3 key points that show the employer you are qualified for the position.
- Highlight your most relevant details and skills from past experiences that relate to the position/organization at hand.
- Be specific! Bolster your middle paragraphs by including specific examples and experiences that showcase your skills.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH:

- Restate your interest and excitement for this position.
- Be sure to refer back to the company mission/values/work that you mentioned in the opening paragraph and how it aligns with your own values/career goals.
- Thank the employer for their time and consideration of your application/inquiry.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Tips to Write an Effective Cover Letter

1. Addressing your cover letter to a specific person makes a difference. Ideally you want the name of the recruiter or the actual person who will be managing you in the role.
 - If that information is not available, “To the Hiring Manger,” “To the Human Resources Director,” or “To the Hiring Team” are acceptable
 - Don't write “To whom it may concern” or “Dear Sir or Madam.”
2. Be enthusiastic! Show off your personality. Ask yourself these questions as you revise:
 - Does this sound like me?
 - How do I differentiate myself from other candidates?
3. Do your research. Show a knowledge of what the organization and position is.
 - What projects at the company are interesting to you?
 - Do they have a mission that excites you?
 - Have you connected with the employer in the past (i.e. career fair, alumni contact, etc)?
4. Jobs get a lot of applicants and online materials can sometimes get lost in the shuffle.
 - Each cover letter you write should be customized to the company you are writing.
 - After applying, consider sending a personalized email to a key stakeholder (recruiter, manager, alumni contact) with your materials. See “*Professional Communications Guide*” on *Career Connections* for examples.
5. Consider how/where technology may impact your application:
Most companies use **Applicant Tracking System (ATS)** software when evaluating candidates.
 - Be sure to thoroughly read through the job description and include keywords you notice, as companies will use the ATS to search for certain keywords/skills that are included in the job description to identify candidates.Using **Generative AI (like ChatGPT)** to assist in writing your cover letter:
 - Can provide a helpful framework, but you have to edit and personalize from there. It can be useful in summarizing or synthesizing information, but it doesn't bring your voice/personality into the letter. Often requires multiple prompts to help evolve your key selling points.
6. The Finishing Touches:
 - A cover letter should be one page.
 - Proofread! Your cover letter must be error-free.
 - Double check that you have included the correct company name, position title and contact person in your cover letter.
 - Review the content once more to ensure it connects to the specific position and doesn't come off as a generic, one-size-fits-all cover letter (or one obviously generated from AI). Recruiters read hundreds of applications, so they can recognize the difference.
7. Follow Up.
 - If you haven't heard anything within 2 weeks of when you applied or expected to hear back, reach out.
 - Restate your strong interest, inquire about the hiring timeline, and ask if there is any additional information you can provide.
 - Always be positive, patient, and polite.

SAMPLE COVER LETTERS

800 E. LANCASTER AVE. ■ VILLANOVA, PA 19085 ■ 555-555-5555 ■ WILLCAT@VILLANOVA.EDU

WILL D. CAT

800 E. Lancaster Ave
Villanova, PA 19085

June 11, 20XX

Susan Smith, Director of Exhibits
Please Touch Museum
4231 Avenue of the Arts
Philadelphia, PA 19131

Copy and paste heading from your resume
OR use standard business-letter format.

Dear Ms. Smith:

Intro { I am very interested in joining the Please Touch Museum as your new Exhibits and Production Intern. I learned of this opportunity through Villanova University's Handshake system. The Museum's mission to "use children's creativity to enhance learning" is consistent with my interests in child development and the museum curatorial process. In addition to my volunteer and work experiences, my educational background would make me a strong asset for your summer internship program.

Ex. 1 { *(Traditional option)*
I am currently pursuing my Bachelor of Arts degree at Villanova with a major in Art History and a minor in Psychology. Several of my courses have focused on art exhibit development. Last summer, I worked as a curatorial intern at the San Diego Museum of Art. For this internship, I collaborated with various curatorial departments within the museum to design and implement new exhibits. The results of my work were praised by both the curators and my professor. I have also taken several courses in Psychology that focus on children's learning and development, so I feel I can use this understanding to connect with the youth audience of your Museum.

In addition to my education and internship, I have extensive experience tutoring and engaging children through the RUIBAL Program at Villanova and the YMCA America Reads program in my home town. Since Freshman year, I have worked to improve the learning outcomes of 20 students. I am passionate about positively impacting the lives of children and I believe that education and art are two important avenues to accomplish this work.

---- **OR** ----

Body { *(Bullet point option)*
I am currently pursuing my Bachelor of Arts degree at Villanova with a major in Art History and a minor in Psychology. Several of my courses have focused on art exhibit development. Throughout my education, I took numerous classes on exhibit development. I also gained broad experience through work and a museum internship.

Ex. 2 { Key qualifications I bring to the Exhibits and Production Intern position are:
• experience as a curatorial intern at the San Diego Museum of Art
• collaboration with local museums to design and implement plans for new exhibits
• psychology coursework in children's learning and development
• hands-on experience improving learning outcomes of 20 children through various tutoring programs

Conclusion { I am confident my passion for art and curation, combined with my experience working with children, will contribute to the exciting, hands-on learning environment at the Please Touch Museum. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me by phone (555-555-5555) or email (willcat@villanova.edu). I look forward to hearing from you!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Will D. Cat Signature

Will D. Cat

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May 10, 20XX

Dr. Phillips:

I am writing to formally apply for the Associate Research position at Williams Hospital. I learned about this position from John Simmons, the Director of Geriatric Research, who encouraged me to submit my application. This opportunity excites me because I am interested in conducting human subject research and advancing my knowledge and contributions in this area. Williams Hospital's commitment to providing high quality care aligns well with my strong belief in helping others and improving their health outcomes through conducting ethical research.

I am currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology with a minor in Peace and Justice at Villanova University. These diverse fields of study exemplify my broad interests, yet they are all driven by my desire to understand people. For the past academic year, I have worked as an undergraduate research assistant for Villanova's MATCH program. My time involved with this program has given me the confidence to conduct literature reviews, verify sources, and carefully edit papers before submitting them for review. The most impactful moments; however, have been presenting my research. At Villanova's Undergraduate Research Symposium in March, I presented to 50 peers and 15 experts in the field on my designated research topic. The MATCH program has allowed me to grow not only as a researcher, but also a public speaker, which will be invaluable as I pursue a career at the forefront of ethical research.

In addition to my education at Villanova, I have also worked as a Resident Assistant on campus for the past two years. In this role, I conducted 15+ campus events geared towards building a strong sense of community amongst the students. Planning initiatives such as the 'Getting to Know Your Neighbors' event enabled me to utilize my creativity, organizational, and collaboration skills to help students feel more connected to those around them. In addition, overseeing 50+ students per year can certainly have its challenges. Students have come to me during difficult moments in their lives, and I've stepped in to provide support, respond to their concerns, and when necessary, refer them to appropriate services on campus. Being a strong leader is a skill I developed during my time as a Resident Assistant and will enable me to thrive at Williams Hospital when interacting with colleagues and patients.

Williams Hospital's mission towards high quality care matches well with my past experiences and future career goals. I hope to use my research and leadership skills at Williams Hospital to contribute meaningfully to the research team and help to impact patient outcomes. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me by phone or email. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Will D. Cat