The Cover Letter, Dissected. (MEPN Version)

Please see page two to read about the purpose and format of a well-written cover letter.

December 00, 0000

Willie Nelson
12 Country Music Singers Road
San Francisco, CA 94114

Dear Ms. Parton:

I wish to apply for an RN position on the hematology/oncology/bone marrow transplant unit at Stanford. My clinical training at UCSF, experience with your floor at Stanford, personal experience with oncology, and organizational skills enable me to contribute to your unit. Cancer has personally touched my life, and the ability to use my skills and experience to care for this population is professionally and personally rewarding.

Let me briefly highlight my relevant skills and experience:

- **Academic Training/Clinical Skills:**
  Through my rotations I have developed a basic foundation of clinical skills. My training enables me to manage patient admissions and discharges, conduct patient interviews, administer medications, coordinate care plans, and educate patients.

- **Oncology-Based Experience**:
  Oncology became my passion after my father successfully battled cancer. Afterwards, I spent a year volunteering for a chemotherapy outpatient clinic, working with adult patients and caregivers. Later, during my Master's Entry Program in Nursing year at UCSF, I spent six months at Stanford's hematology/oncology unit for my Medical-Surgical and Introduction to Nursing clinical rotations. Lastly, my Parent Child Nursing clinical rotation was spent working with pediatric oncology patients.

- **Organizational Skills:**
  Through my previous career as a Technology Help Desk Analyst at Apple, I have become highly organized and detail oriented, and am able to troubleshoot problems in time sensitive environments. In a clinical setting, I find these skills valuable while working in clinical teams and when advocating for my patients.

I enjoy working with oncology patients, especially the adult patient population, because I find it rewarding to care, advocate and educate patients and caregivers who face challenging illnesses. I particularly enjoyed my Stanford experience because of the diverse patient population and range clinical cases that only a teaching hospital such as Stanford can provide.

I would be very interested in speaking with you further about a career at Stanford. Please feel free to contact me at (333) 111-2222, or via email at willie.nelson@email.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Willie Nelson

UCSF.OCPD

OCPD
office of career &
professional development

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Willie Nelson

A. Why write a cover letter?

A CV/resume only explains your previous academic training and professional skills. A Cover Letter:

1. Summarizes how that academic training and professional skills will directly benefit them.
2. Explains desire – why you want the job.

B. Often, employers only skim the first paragraph, so Stanley's paragraph is a summary of:

A. What he brings to the table (experience & skills)
B. Why he wants the job (desire)

This includes his:
1. Academic training
2. Professional skills
3. Desire

C. The rest of his cover letter gives detailed evidence about his claims in his first paragraph. It also follows the order of his summary paragraph.

1. Academic Training/Clinical Skills
2. Oncology Based Experience
   Organizational Skills
3. Desire

D. Note that the text focuses on examples and language about what he is able to do for the employer. For example: "My training enables me...".

E. Isn't this a long letter?

Cover letter are 1-4 paragraphs. A briefer letter includes only the first "summary" and last paragraphs.

F. Do employers really read cover letters?

Yes. The real question isn't if, but **when** do employers read cover letters? Think about how you sort through a stack of information. First, you'd probably skim the CV/resume and first paragraph of the cover letter, to sort candidates into 'yes', 'no' and 'maybe' piles.

The second time through, you'd read everything closely to whittle down your 'yes' pile to 3-5 strong candidates to invite to interview. But what if there were 6?

Here's when a cover letter is most valuable: it makes your argument about how you can contribute to their organization, and why you want the position. Those without cover letters have to hope that the employer can figure that out. It might be the edge you need!

OCPD
office of career & professional development

To have your letter critiqued, schedule an appointment with the OCPD at 415.476.4986. We book 2-3 weeks in advance.