

The Cover Letter, Dissected.

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

Paul Newman, PT
Director of Outpatient PT
Kaiser Oakland
0000 Sting Ave
Oakland, CA 00000

Dear Dr. Newman:

I read about the Staff Physical Therapist position (#123456) in the outpatient physical therapy clinic at Kaiser Oakland with great interest. I will graduate with a DPT from the UCSF/SFSU Physical therapy Program in June, and expect to be licensed by September. In addition to my clinical experience, I have over 3 years of teaching experience with both adolescent and adult learners. I was thrilled to see the vacancy, as I had an exceptionally positive clinical affiliation at your facility last summer. Kaiser's philosophy to care, focused on patient education, mirrors my own.

During my clinical affiliations, I was involved in every stage of care, including evaluating and assessing patients, establishing treatment goals, and coordinating and implementing a plan of care. I find it particularly rewarding to work with patients with complex medical needs and persistent pain. My approach is to care for patients holistically – focusing on incremental improvement by responding to their physical, cognitive, and learning needs, as well as considering the social, economic and psychological factors influencing their health and wellbeing.

I also enjoy the teaching aspect to clinical care, educating patients on how to take an active role in their own recovery. This includes helping patients to thoroughly understand their clinical situation, functioning, and develop realistic expectations for recovery. I developed my teaching skills by serving as a teaching assistant for both Kinesiology and Orthopedics in the UCSF/SFSU program. Prior to my clinical training, I also taught in both elementary school and ESL learners. As an educator, I learned to assess an individual's understanding of a subject, identify their dominant learning style and modify my teaching method to meet their needs. These abilities prove helpful every time I partner with patients and caregivers to teach them the information and skills they need to care for themselves.

Each day of my Kaiser clinical affiliation, I saw the positive impact that the Kaiser model had on employees. Your in-house infrastructure and interdisciplinary team-based approach meant that I always felt supported as a practitioner, and could in turn successfully support my patients. I would welcome the chance to bring my clinical skills and commitment to teaching to a team committed to providing comprehensive care and education to patients.

Warmly,

Angelina Jolie

Angela Jolie

12 Movie Street, San Francisco, CA 0000. 111.222.3333. ajoliey@email.edu

 Office of
Career & Professional Development

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To have your letter critiqued, schedule an appointment with the OCPD at 415.476.4986. Visit us at career.ucsf.edu.

A. Why write a cover letter?

A CV or resume only explains all of 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 & clinical training**
2. **Teaching experience/focus on education**
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?

A cover letter can be 1-4 paragraphs. A briefer letter would only include the first "summary" and last paragraph.

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!