

THE WRITERS' STUDIO PRESENTS

Writing Creative Hooks for Your Cover Letters

A Professional Writing Workshop
Carrie Nelson
Winter 2022



TODAY'S DISCUSSION

Writing Creative Hooks for Your Cover Letter

- Introduction to Cover Letters
- Parts of the Cover Letter
- Importance of Introductions
- Writing Creative Hooks
- Examples and Advice
- Writing Activity
- Questions

COVER LETTERS: THE BASICS



27 Nelson Road, Apt. 30
London W11 2NN
England
Tel: 0180 34567
Fax: 0180 34567
Monday 15, December

Mr. Smith
27 Nelson Road, Apt. 30
London W11 2NN
England
Dear Mr. Smith
I am your advertisement for a Business Journalist in today's newspaper. I am very interested in the job and I think I have many of the necessary skills.
I studied politics and modern languages at University. I am fluent in French, German and Spanish. I had academic experience in Europe and South America, and in the same time I worked as a business journalist for the Company during the last five years.
I enclose a copy of my curriculum vitae. I look forward to hearing from you soon. Please let me know if you need more information.
Yours sincerely
Nancy Chandler



INTRODUCTION TO COVER LETTERS

Cover letters are required for most jobs and should be tailored to the specific position and company.

- Introduce who you are and why you're an ideal candidate for the position
- Convince the reader to look at your résumé
- Convey your enthusiasm, uniqueness and skills
- Provide a sample of your communication skills
- Show your reader you're tailoring your application
- Need to be brief; one page

PARTS OF COVER LETTERS

Greeting

- Make sure it's appropriate and accurate
- Avoid Dear Sir/Ma'am or To Whom it May Concern

Introduction

- Most important part of your cover letter
- Show you're interested, qualified and a good fit
- Keep it brief, relevant, distinct and engaging

Body Paragraphs

- Explain your relevant experience and skills
- Organize by job type or hard skills and soft skills
- Include any necessary information
- Be brief, 2-3 paragraphs

Salutation

- Reiterate most important information
- Thank the reader for the time and give follow up info if needed
- Signing Sincerely is fine; a signature is a nice touch

A TIP:

Tailor your cover letter to the specific job and company you're applying to. The more focused and targeted it is, the better. Read the job description to understand the key qualities and skills needed, but also research the company's values, mission and goals.

WRITING CREATIVE HOOKS



WRITING CREATIVE HOOKS

Introductions are the most important part of your cover letter.

If you don't catch your reader's interest with the first paragraph, they might not move on to the next.

- Use your introduction to hook your reader, showing them your enthusiastic and qualified
- Highlight your personality, creativity and sense of humor
- Taking the time to tailor your opening to the specific job and company can really help you stand out
- Remember, writing is a process and it can take several drafts to come up with a good hook

A TIP:

It might seem easier to write one cover letter and use it for every job application, but one size doesn't fit all. Recruiters will know you didn't take the time to show you care about their company or this job. If you don't seem like you care, why should they?

TELL YOUR ORIGIN STORY

Few intros are as unique and powerful as this.

- Reveal what choices led you to your current path
- Select key details that will make you stand out and that are relevant to your area of interest and the job
- Consider what makes you different from others in your field
- Segue quickly into why you're a good candidate



Katherine Cohen

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER

Katherine Cohen

912.555.3567

KatCohenPhotos/Portfolio.com

April 13, 2021

To Ms. Anderson,

I was twelve years old the first time I went to the Grand Canyon. While my family was falling in love with the majesty of mother nature, I was falling in love with my camera. I began experimenting with composition, framing and lighting, trying to make my images as impactful as possible. Ten years later, I have a lot more photography experience and education under my belt, and I would love to put it to work for your team.

I am proficient with a wide array of professional cameras, lighting gear, and lenses. I have taken several courses in photo editing and I am an Adobe Photoshop expert. I have recently been developing my video shooting and editing skills as well.

On a personal level, I am a people person with a knack for getting smiles and making clients happy. I am reliable and capable in fast-paced environments, and I always deliver my results on time. When it comes to photo editing, I am highly organized and I pride myself on being extremely attentive to detail, with an eye for presentation.

I would like to invite you to take a look at my online portfolio here to see the styles and quality of my work. Please find my contact information at the top of this letter and on my website.

Sincerely,

Katherine Cohen

Katherine Cohen

SHARE AN ACCOMPLISHMENT

Great way to show you're effective, qualified and get results.

- Discuss accomplishments, results and explain importance if necessary
- Give necessary background info/ context quickly
- Provide numbers if possible
- Does not have to be related to your field but needs to highlight a transferable skill

ELEANOR FITZGERALD

Social Media Content Creator

ELEANOR FITZGERALD
ELANORFITZGERAL@EMAIL.COM
912.555.3567
#ELLEFITZ

Dear Hiring Manager,

I always thought my passion for social media was more of a hobby than a viable career, but when I interned for Brighter Media, I jumped on the opportunity to oversee their social media accounts. In just a few months, I nearly doubled the company's Instagram followers and led a successful Facebook ad campaign that generated over 10K in revenue. Now, I'm confident content creation is where I'm best suited, and I'd love to use these skills to help raise Sunset Creative's online profile.

My background in developing and editing original web articles and features on a variety of subjects positions me to substantially impact your organization. With my commitment to cultivating strategic relationships to encourage future connections and stimulate ideas, I am prepared to extend my record of writing and editing accomplishments to your company.

I also have excellent interpersonal, time management and creative problem solving skills. I excel at meeting deadlines and working under pressure. I am capable working alone and on teams, and I believe all these skills make me an ideal candidate.

With my expertise in writing a broad range of content creation, combined with my outstanding interpersonal skills and commitment to exploring innovative and exciting story ideas, I am positioned to significantly benefit your team. I look forward to discussing my qualifications in more detail. Thank you for your consideration.


All the best,


Eleanor Fitzgerald

Email: eleanorfitzgerald@email.com

My Website: www.eleanorfitzgeraldzcreativecontent.com

My blog: www.eleanorfitzgeraldzcreativecontent.com/blog

 [eleanoroninstagram](#)

 [eleanorfitzgeraldtweets](#)

 [eleanorfitzgerald234](#)

DISTINGUISH YOURSELF

**Set yourself apart from others
in your field.**

- Avoid interests and attributes that are common in your field/ amongst your peers
- Consider events and experiences in your life that will make you stand out
- Be sure to connect this information to a skill or quality that's relevant to the job you're applying to

Edward Diaz

Design Management Student

Dear Sir/Madam,

Two tours in Afghanistan taught me a lot. To this day I carry sunscreen everywhere and get unnaturally excited about the prospect of playing bingo (there isn't much to do out in the desert). But what's affected me the most is the belief that effective teams are integral to a project's success. This belief guided me as an officer for the United States Army and led me to pursue my MA in Design Management at the Savannah College of Art and Design where I focus on facilitating collaboration and creative problem solving.

In addition to my master's degree in fine art I also studied business administration and have over two years of experience holding a management position. I have experience conducting interviews along with hiring and training new employees. I also filled out reports and kept upper management updated on all issues regarding my department.

I have excellent verbal skills with the ability to express myself in a clear and concise manner. I can also make a connection with clients by listening to what they are saying when they describe the type of design they need. This helps to ensure we meet or exceed their expectations.

Please see my attached resume and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Edward Diaz

eddiaz23@student.scad.edu
912.555.3253

HIGHLIGHT SHARED VALUES

Connect with the company's culture.

- Show that you're a good fit by discussing values, ideals, beliefs or other interests you share
- Research the company's mission, goals, etc.
- Make sure this value or goal is evident in your work
- Make sure you're genuine, don't exaggerate or inflate information

JACQUELINE THOMPSON

Hi Green Glo!

I believe fashion is all about understanding trends – and the trend I'm most excited about right now is sustainability. I've been following Green Glo's blog and social media for a long time, and I love your dedication to using natural and sustainable materials. Much of my volunteer work focuses on environmental protection and awareness, so when I saw you were hiring fashion interns, I couldn't wait for the opportunity to combine my personal and professional interests.

I'm currently a junior at the Savannah College of Art and Design, and my coursework has provided me a solid foundation in the business and creative side of fashion. I have a 3.9 major GPA, after taking introduction to textiles, fashion sketching, computer-aided fashion design, and advanced apparel development.

Outside of the classroom, I'm an active volunteer and this experience has taught me teamwork, leadership and communication skills I know I can use to help Green Glo.

I truly believe that fashion can change the world, and fully support Green Glo's mission to do so. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Thompson

123 Maple St., Atlanta, GA, 32345
JackieThompsonFashionPortfolio.com
(233) 456-7890

CITE A MUTUAL CONNECTION

Reference an important contact or connection.

- Name drop if it's important
- Use your best judgement to see if the name will mean something to your reader
- Provide necessary background information/ context

Alex Chao
Cover Letter

Dear Mr. Bell,

I've been attending comic cons since I was a kid. I love connecting with my favorite characters and stories, so it didn't surprise me that I wound up pursuing Sequential Arts in college. What did surprise me, however, was when Derek Joon recommended I submit my portfolio with JoonBug Publishers after we met at last year's Dragon Con.

I have experience in many aspects of sequential arts creation, and am skilled at delivering hand drawn and computer created illustrations. My passion is for character design, but I love creating environments and including fun, thematic and quirky background details too.

I've worked as a freelance artist for multiple Kickstarter projects, several of which have been completed. For these assignment, I diligently submitted my work for approval, revision and completion, coordinating with my client, supervisor and creative team to ensure the project was on track and and on point in terms or art, story and production.

Please see my attached portfolio and resume if you're interested in working together. After meeting with Mr. Joon, I'm excited about his company's creative vision and think my skills, style and passion will be a good fit. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Alex Chao

Alex Chao

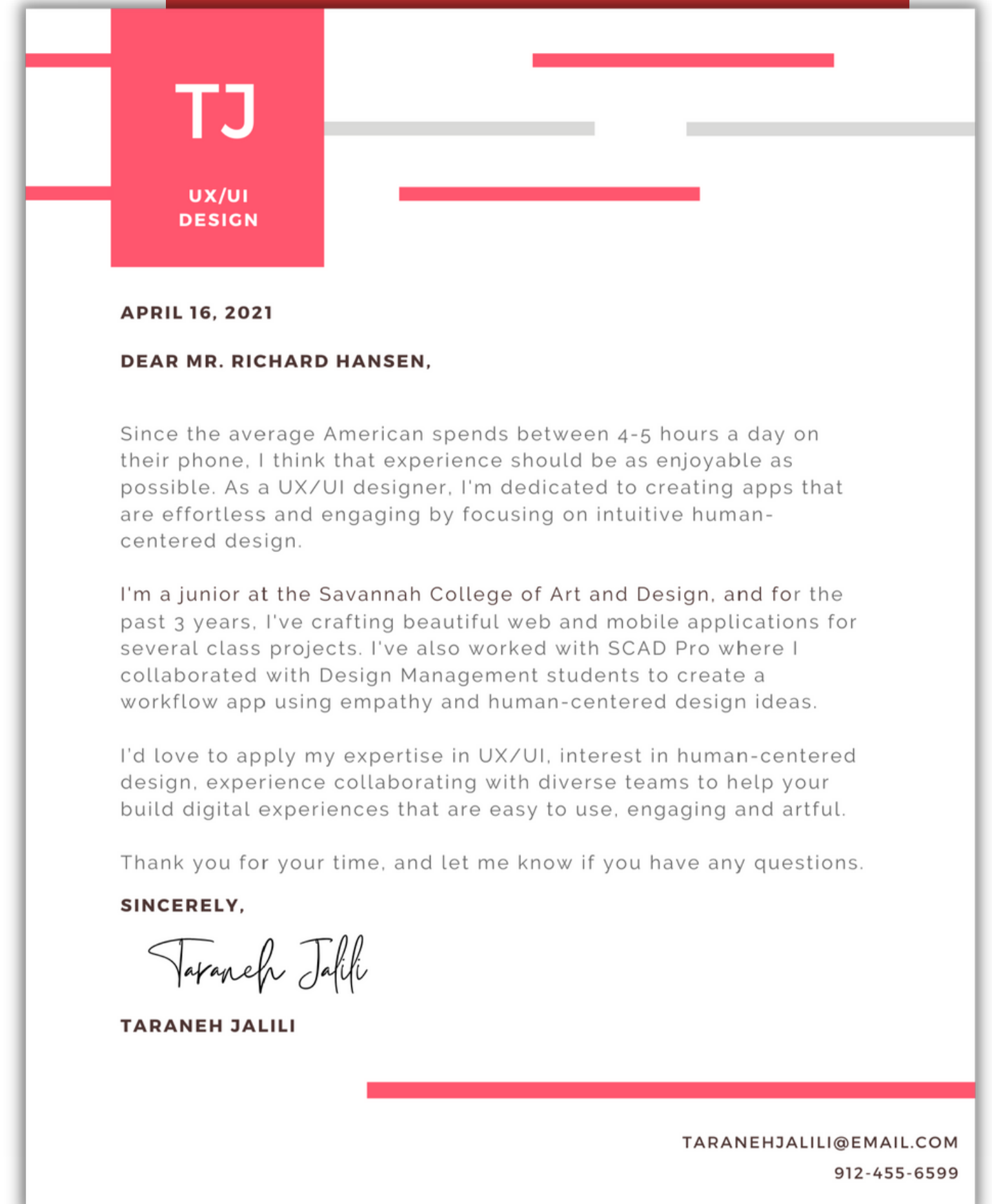
85 Edging Court, Atlanta, GA • 569 734 7306 • yongmengchao@email.com

AlexChaoComics.com/Portfolio

START WITH A SURPRISING FACT

Pique your reader's curiosity or engage their interest with new information.

- Share an important piece of information if it excites you and is related to what you do or how you do it
- This can be a fact, news item, statistic, etc.
- Try not to tell the reader something they already know



TIPS FOR CREATIVE HOOKS

Show Your Passion

- Seem genuine, authentic and excited
- Remember to distinguish yourself from others in your field

Use Your Voice

- It's important you sound authentic and personable
- Read your cover letter out loud and get feedback

Include Evocative Details

- Paint an image in your reader's mind with strong details
- Favor concrete over abstract and specific over general

Stay Focused

- Don't lose sight of your main point
- Everything needs to support why you're a good candidate

Tell a Story

- Stories are more engaging and memorable
- Think of a story that expresses your best qualities

A TIP:

Cover letters aren't about why you want a job, but rather, why a job should want you. Make sure you show the company you're a great candidate for the job early in the letter by targeting your cover letter.

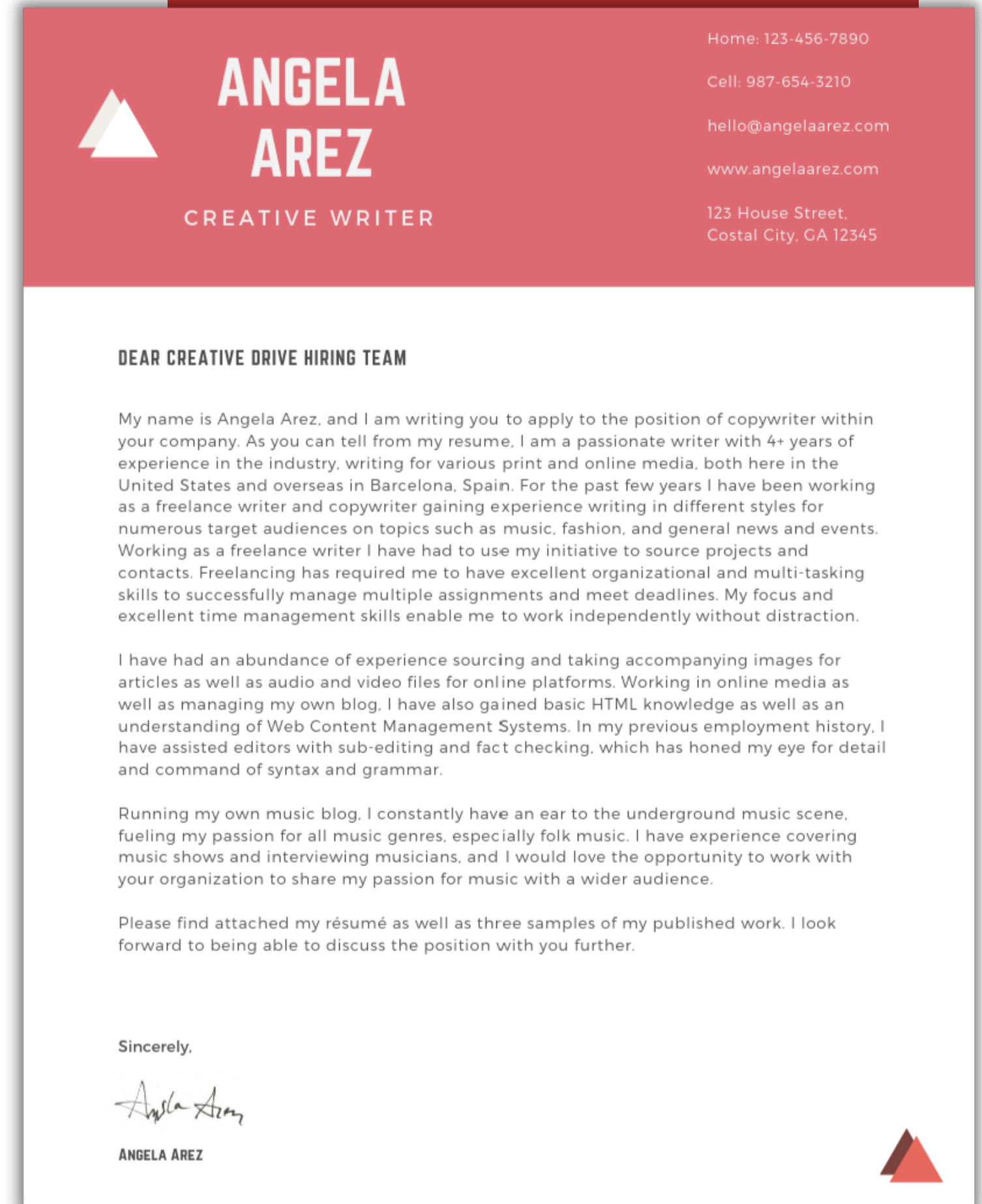
WHAT TO AVOID



WHAT TO AVOID

Don't waste your reader's time giving them information they don't need to know.

- Every sentence is an opportunity for new and important information.
- Don't repeat information that can be found elsewhere or that is unnecessary
- Make sure your introduction isn't too long
- Remove redundant, vague or unnecessary information



WHAT TO AVOID

Don't turn off your reader with your tone, voice or style.

- Avoid arrogant, disinterested, overly causal or otherwise off-putting voice, tone, etc.
- Don't tell the company how you can "fix" their problem
- Don't only be a fan, you need to do the job they need done, not just love the company
- Don't tell the company what they already know

**BRANDON
BLEAKER**

Number: 453-443-7280
Email: bbleaker@email.com
Portfolio: www.bbleaker.com
Social Media: @brandonbleaker
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/brandonbleaker

DEAR SUSAN HUGHES,

Looking for a dynamic Marketing Copywriter and Editor? Search no further, because I am ready for the job. With over 8 + years' experience as a Marketing Copywriter and Editor, I will step in and make an immediate impact on Creative Drive's continued marketing success.

You are seeking someone who can write engaging and persuasive copy while ensuring all communication and advertising meets company expectations for message and accuracy, and that is exactly what I am prepared to do. As Marketing and Copywriter and Editor, I write website copy, edit communications, develop advertising materials, and review all pieces for adherence to project guidelines and editorial standards. In addition, I am detail-oriented, organized and highly accurate.

As you know, Creative Drive is committed to creating quality content for its clients and pushing the boundaries of brand development. I am confident I can help the company continue these goals.

I look forward to meeting with you in person this week and discussing the details of this position. In the meantime, please find my resume attached. References are available upon request.

SINCERELY,

BRANDON BLEAKER

WHAT TO AVOID

Poor, sloppy or unpolished written communication skills.

- Cover letters show that you can write and communicate well
- Read your work out loud, revise drafts and get feedback if necessary
- Remember, some readers are just looking for a reason to say no. Be sure not to give them one

Harrison Pollard

9 1 2 - 3 3 3 - 4 5 6 6

1 2 3 4 Shell St.
Savannah, Ga 3 2 1 2 3

hpollard@email.com

Harrison Pollard
1234 Shell St. Savannah,
GA 32123

April 30, 2021

Miguel Sanchez
Millennial Marketing Solutions
1443 Copenhagen Plaza
New York, NY 44556

Dear Mr. Sanchez,

My name is Harrison Pollard, and I would like to apply for the marketing intern position at your company that I recently found on the LinkedIn website. I am a senior Advertising and Branding student at the Savannah College of Art and Design, and am an ideal candidate for this position.

I have skills in advertising, branding, PR, marketing, and research. I have a 3.8 GPA, and my skills include:

- Marketing Analytics
- Strategic Planning
- Branding and Advertising

Using the skills listed above, I designed a marketing campaign for a student Fashion show, advertising the event, selling tickets, and earning enough money to pay for the venue and supplies. I believe these skills will situate me to succeed at your company, and I look forward to helping you do so.

Please see my attached resume. I'll be in contact in a few weeks to check on the status of my application.

Sincerely,

Harrison Pollard

WRITING ACTIVITY



WRITING ACTIVITY:

- Tell me what you do. Be as specific and detailed as possible.

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- Tell me what you do. Be as specific and detailed as possible.
- Tell me why you do it. Explain why it is important to you, what motivates you, interests you, etc.

WRITING ACTIVITY:

- Tell me what you do. Be as specific and detailed as possible.
- Tell me why you do it. Explain why it is important to you, what motivates you, interests you, etc.
- Think of a story that shows this information. Write it.

QUESTIONS?





THANK YOU!

EMAIL

write@scad.edu

OFFICE

Jen Library 219

PHONE

912.525.4707