How to Write a Compelling Cover Letter

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What Is a Cover Letter?

- This is a separate document that should be written and uploaded with the main manuscript submission.
- You can write this after you have finished the Abstract.
- The cover letter should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief in a formal manner.
Significance of Cover Letter
• The cover letter is very important as that is the first thing that editor reads and serves as the gateway to the Abstract and then the rest of the manuscript.
Factors that enhance the chance of manuscript acceptance:

- Obtain written, informed consent and maintain confidentiality
- Target audience or journal according to your message
- Consider discussing ideas with the editorial staff before starting
- Collaborate with a content expert, if appropriate focus on a single educational message
- Aim for brevity and clarity
- Put careful thought into the cover letter
• The cover letter is your chance to lobby on behalf of your manuscript.

• It is far from just a formality and should be written with the same care as your manuscript’s text.

• It designed to influence the decision of the editor to send your manuscript out for peer review.

• It will argue that your manuscript is a good fit for the journal you are submitting it to and highlight your most important findings.
What to Include in a Cover Letter
• It should clearly state:
  • The title of the manuscript, and
  • Why the authors feel that their case report should be published (based on any already available literature on the topic at hand)
• Should include the authors’ contact information.
In your cover letter to the editor, make sure that you sell your manuscript by articulating the salient educational message.
How to Write an Effective Cover Letter
• A cover letter should be written like a standard business letter.

• Address the editor formally by name, if known.

• Begin your cover letter with a paragraph that states the name of the manuscript and the names of the authors.

• In this first paragraph and the next, describe the rationale behind your case report and the major findings.
• Next, write a short paragraph that explains why your manuscript would be a good fit for the journal.
• Finally, close with a brief paragraph indicating the following:
  • The manuscript is original
  • No part of the manuscript has been published before, nor is any part of it under consideration for publication at another journal
  • There are no conflicts of interest to disclose
  • A list of potential reviewers (only if requested by the journal)
Individual journals may have instructions for cover letter
Instructions for Cover Letter International Journal of Case Reports and Images (IJCRI)

• A cover letter is essential and must be submitted with the manuscript.
• Include the following in the Cover Letter:
  • Section to which the manuscript is being submitted e.g. Case Report, Case Series etc.
• State in the letter that:
  • you wish to submit the manuscript for consideration for publication in IJCRI;
  • the manuscript is being submitted by the corresponding author on behalf of all authors;
  • it presents the original work of the authors;
  • identical or similar work has not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere;
  • all the authors made significant contribution to the study; and
  • all the authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.
• In a short paragraph highlight the important reasons for presenting the case(s).
• Include in the cover letter - the full name, affiliation, academic degree(s) and email address of all authors.
Dear Dr. (editor's family name);

On behalf of all the authors, I would like to ask you to consider our manuscript entitled "(here add manuscript title)" for publication in (here add journal name) as a case report. This report highlights (here add diagnosis), which is of special interest because (here add unique, or interesting or especially educationally valuable feature of this report). The patient has provided permission to publish these features of his/her case, and the identity of the patient has been protected.

We feel that the findings described in this case report will be of special interest to the readers of (add journal name).

Without wishing to take a liberty, my coauthors and I would like to suggest, as potential referees, Dr. (A, address, fax, phone, e-mail), Dr. (B, address, fax, phone, e-mail) and Dr. (C, address, fax, phone, e-mail).

This manuscript has not been published and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. All the authors have read the manuscript and have approved this submission.

Sincerely,

(Submitting author's full name and degree: e.g. M.D. or M.D., D.Med. Sc., or M.D., Ph.D.)

(Institution and full postal address
Telephone number; facsimile number
E-mail address)
To,
The Editors,
[Insert journal name here]

Subject: Submission of [Following are the categories of manuscripts. Delete whatever is not applicable] “Editorial, Review Article, Original Article, Short Report, Rapid Communication, Case Series, Case In Images, Case Reports, Clinical Images, Letter to Editors” titled, “[Type or copy/paste here the title of the manuscript]”.

Dear Sir/Ma’am

We are submitting a [Following are the categories of manuscripts. Delete whatever is not applicable] “Editorial, Review Article, Original Article, Short Report, Rapid Communication, Case Series, Case In Images, Case Reports, Clinical Images, Letter to Editors” titled, “[Type or copy/paste here the title of the manuscript]” for consideration for publication in [Insert journal name here].

I, __________________________ (Corresponding author) certify that:

- The manuscript is being submitted by me (Corresponding author) on behalf of all the authors.
- Written, informed consent was taken from the patient/parents/legal guardians/next of kin for reporting this case (strike out whatever is not applicable).
- The manuscript is original work of all authors.
- All authors made a significant contribution to this study.
- This manuscript has not been submitted for publication; it has not been accepted for publication and has not been published in any other journal.
- All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.
References:

Questions?