Chapter

2

How to Create a Cover Letter

In this chapter, we will learn the following to World Class standards:

- **Using the Ribbon in Word 2007**
- **Changing the Font and Font Size**
- **Setting the Margins**
- **Inserting a Table into the Document**
- **Modifying and Adding Text to the Table**
- **Adding the Date, Recipient's Address and Salutation**
- **Changing the Indent for Adding Paragraphs**
- **Adding Paragraphs to the Letter**
- **Closing the Cover Letter with our Name and Signature**
- **Reviewing our Letter With the Spelling and Grammar Tool**
- **Saving the Cover Letter**

Using the Ribbon in Word 2007

Figure 2-1 – Word 2007 Ribbon with Quick Access Toolbar

One of the biggest changes in Microsoft Word 2007 is the addition of the ribbon instead of all the different toolbars. Now all the tools are located on the different panels under the several tabs located at the top of the ribbon. The **Quick Access** toolbar is one of the only remaining devices in the new version of Microsoft Word and it contains the basic **Save**, **Open**, **Print Preview**, **Spell Check** and **Undo** tools.

Changing the Font and Font Size

On the **Home** tab of the ribbon is the **Font** panel. The default font and size for Microsoft Word 2007 is **Calibri (Body)** with a font size of **11**. We are going to change the font to **Times New Roman** and the size to **12**. Begin by clicking the top left drop-down arrow of the font Listbox to select the font style. The font styles are in alphabetical order so scroll down until we see **Times New Roman** and select it (Figure 2-2). After picking the style, click the drop-down arrow to the right of the font style box and select a font size of **12** (Figure 2-3).
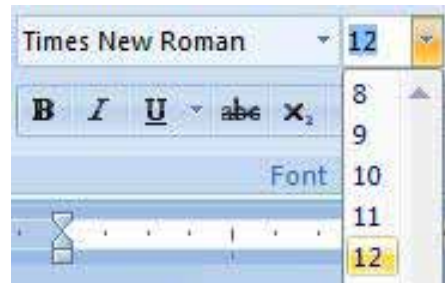

Figure 2-2 – Selecting "Times New Roman"   Figure 2-3 – Selecting Size "12" Font

Setting the Margins

To set the margins, go to the **Page Layout** tab and select the **Margins** tool on the **Page Setup** panel (Figure 2-4). When we select the tool, a number of options will drop down beneath it. Select the **Normal** margin setting with 1-inch margins on all sides of the document (Figure 2-5).
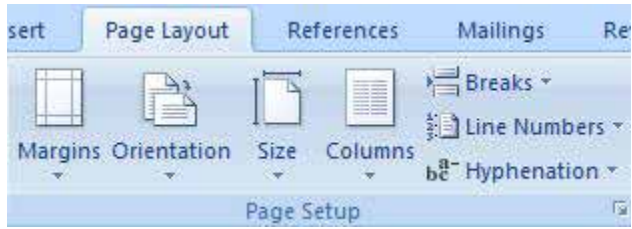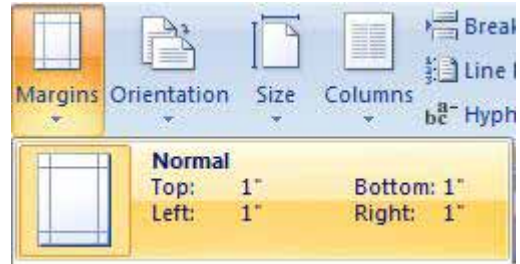
Figure 2-4 – Page Setup Panel

Figure 2-5 – Selecting Normal Margin Setting

Inserting a Table into the Document

The top of a cover letter contains the header, which has the sender's name, address, city, state, zip code, phone number and email address. We can either stack the information one on top another, which uses up page space or we can place the data side by side. In this lesson, we will place our contact facts side by side, so we will insert a single row, two column table at the top of the page to hold our name, return address, email and phone number.

To insert a table into our document, we go to the **Insert** tab and select the **Table** tool. On the drop-down panel that appears under the tool, select a **2x1** table (Figure 2-6). We can also insert a table by going to the first tool on the options panel, called the **Insert Table** tool, and we can select the number of rows and columns we want in the table in the window that appears. In this case, we want 2 columns and 1 row (Figure 2-7). Both methods of inserting a table are equally effective but the first method is generally faster.
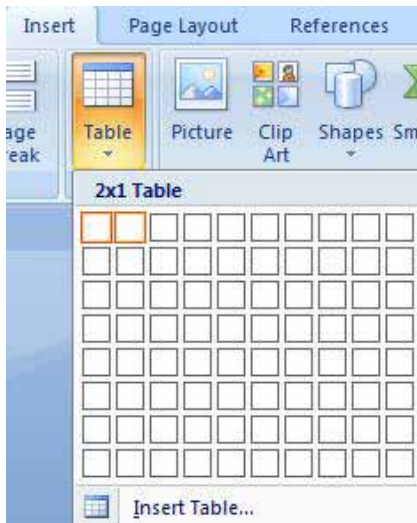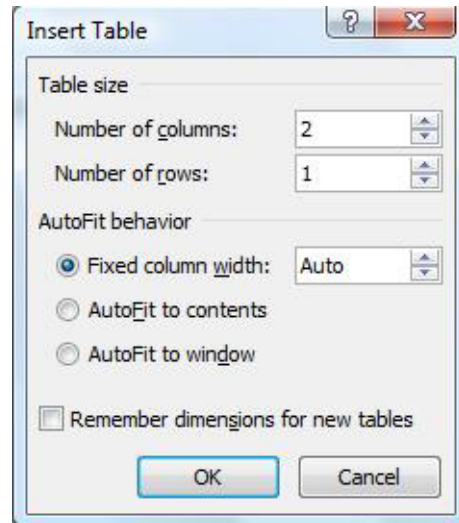

Figure 2-6 – Selecting 2x1 Table

Figure 2-7 – Insert Table Window

Modifying and Adding Text to the Table

In the left cell, we are going to type in our name. However, we first need to change the font size to **16**, which cause the phrase to appear more prominently. We can do this the same way we changed the font size from 11 to 12, by clicking the drop-down arrow to the right of the font style box and select a font size of **16.** Next, we need to center align the text. Under the **Home** tab on the **Paragraph** panel there are four text alignment tools. The first is the **Right** align, followed by the **Center**, **Left** and **Justified** alignment tools (Figure 2-8). Select the **Center** tool and then type our name in the left cell of the table (Figure 2-9). In the right cell, we are going to type in our address, telephone number and email address. Once again, we need to format the way we are going to enter in the text. Begin by changing the font size to **10**. In addition, we need to change the alignment of the text using the **Right** align tool. Now type we address on the first line. Next hit **Enter** and type "Telephone:" and our telephone number after. Press **Enter** again and type our email address.
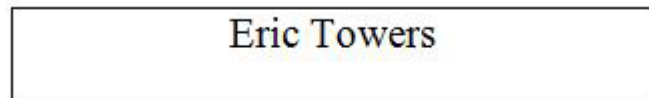
Figure 2-8 – Center and Right Align Tools

Figure 2-9 – Center Aligned Name in Left Cell

Figure 2-10 – Left and Right Cells with Text

Next, we are going to modify the table and its contents. Begin by placing the cursor in the left cell of the table. Next, go to the **Layout** tab and on the **Alignment** panel there are nine different alignment settings. Pick the **Align Center** tool and our name will be centered both vertically and horizontally in the cell (Figure 2-11). Next, left click the move button at the top corner of the table (Figure 2-12). Clicking on the move button will select the entire table. With the entire table selected, go to the **Paragraph** panel under the **Home** tab and click the drop-down arrow on the bottom right tool (Border Settings). In the list of options that appears, select the **No Border** option (Figure 2-13). The dark lines bordering the table should now turn to light blue, dashed lines. Now the table is complete and should appear as in Figure 2-14.
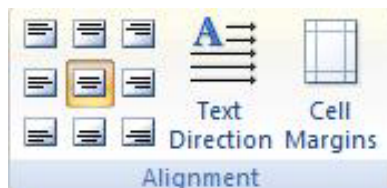
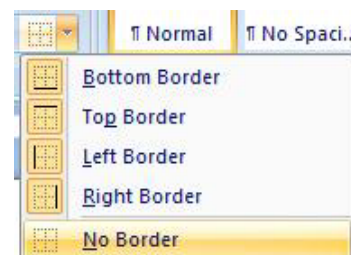**Figure 2-11 – Alignment Panel and Align Center Tool**

Figure 2-12 – Move Button

Figure 2-13 – No Border Option

Eric Towers	9000 Round St., Columbus, Ohio, 43215 Telephone: (614) 222-9200 etowers@gmail.com

Figure 2-14 – Completed Table Without Border

Adding the Date, Recipient's Address and Salutation

Place the cursor beneath the table and add a space by hitting **Enter**. Now, type the full date in the document. Make sure we type the full date and not just the short hand version because an abbreviated date such as 7/3/09 can mean July 3, 2009 in some countries and March 7, 2009 in others. Press **Enter** twice to add a space after the date. Type in the recipient's name, title, organization and address. After that, punch Enter twice and add the salutation. The best salutation for a cover letter is to just put the recipient's name with a comma after it. Salutations containing "Dear" and other sentimental greetings are not particularly appropriate for professional occasions such as a cover letter or email so avoid them in those situations. Type in all the information in shown in Figure 2-15.

Eric Towers

July 30, 2009

Mr. Joe Smith
Engineering Manager
Design and Build, LLC
9876 High St.
Columbus, Ohio 43201

Mr. Smith,

Figure 2-15 – Adding Date, Recipient's Address and Salutation

Changing the Indent for Adding Paragraphs

To change the indent of the first line of each paragraph, we need to move the top left triangle on the margin ruler. If the margin ruler is not already active on the screen around the document, we can activate it by selecting the View Ruler tool at the top of the right scroll bar (Figure 2-16). Now, click and hold the top triangle on the ruler and drag it ½ inch to the right (Figure 2-17). Moving the triangle will make the first line of every paragraph start with a ½ inch indent.
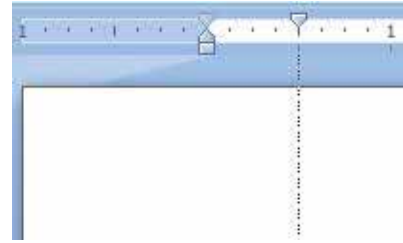
Figure 2-16 – View Ruler Tool

Figure 2-17 – Moving Indent ½ Inch

Adding Paragraphs to the Letter

A cover letter should contain at least three paragraphs: the opening, the body and the closing. Also, the paragraphs should be written using the Justify alignment setting. The first paragraph should be straight forward and to the point. It should explain our purpose for writing the letter, which in this case is applying for a position. The second paragraph should explain why we are qualified for the position and direct the reader to our strengths. The closing paragraph is the "contact me" paragraph. Make sure we include available times and days that we can be contacted as well as a phone number and email address at which we will answer. Our information will obviously correspond with our own purpose for writing the letter but Figure 2-18 contains a writing sample to act as a model for us.

I have spent four years in the Computer Aided Design (CAD) industry as a student, a junior designer and college intern. I am interested in the designer's position where I can Design and Build in all of your efforts.

My success in completing tasks comes from my acquired experience in multiple disciplines requiring engineering knowledge, leadership skills and engineering graphic design ability. In my studies and employment, I have led project development and worked with the manufacturing specialists in the construction of assemblies and in the installation of equipment. I also have the 2D, 3D and programming skills to run the AutoCAD, Microstation and Solid Edge applications in completing drawings. I hold multiple CAD certificates that demonstrate my expertise in these software packages.

If you wish to contact me, you can call me at 614-222-9200 Monday through Thursday from 8 AM to 4 PM, or email me at etowers@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Figure 2-18 – Sample Writing for Cover Letter

Closing the Cover Letter with Our Name and Signature

To add the closing, first we need to press Enter twice to add a space after the last paragraph and we also need to move the ½-inch indent triangle back to its original position. With the cursor aligned on the right side of the page, type in the closing words. Closing such as "Sincerely," and "Thank You," are very appropriate for closing a letter. After typing the closing, add four spaces below and then type your name and title below it (Figure 2-19). Adding four spaces between the

closing words and name will allow us to add place our written signature after we print the letter.
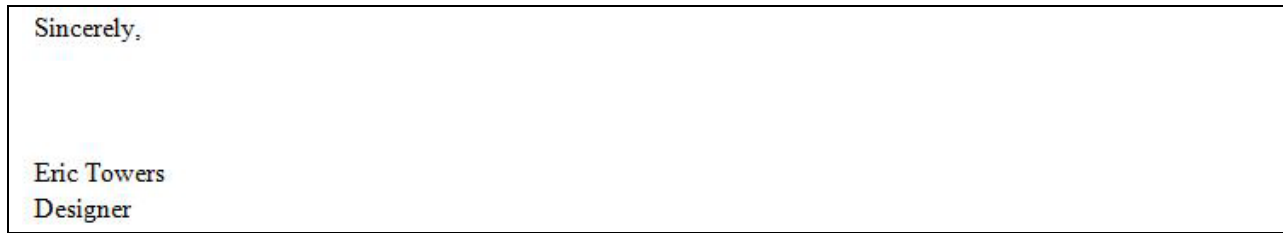

Sincerely,

Eric Towers
Designer

Figure 2-19 – Adding Wer Closing

Reviewing the Letter With the Spelling and Grammar Tool

The **Spelling and Grammar** tool can be found on the far left of the **Proofing** panel under the **Review** tab. Words that are misspelled will be underlined in red and grammatical mistakes will be underlined in green. If we have only a few mistakes, the easiest way to correct them is to right click with our mouse on the misspelled or grammatically incorrect word and the correction options will appear (Figure 2-20). If we have a number of spelling and grammar mistakes, we can just select the **Spelling and Grammar** tool on the **Proofing** panel and running through the correction process on the window that appears (Figure 2-21).
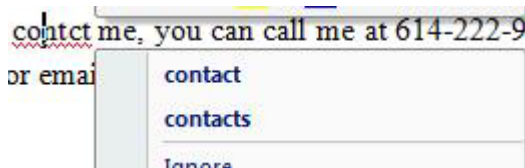

Figure 2-20 – Right Clicking to Correct

Figure 2-21 – Spelling and Grammar Window

Saving the Cover Letter

To save the document, click on the **Save** tool on the **Quick Access** toolbar which is located at the top left of the program. The Save As window will appear in the display. We can save the file into a folder we have already created or we can create a new folder by selecting the New Folder tool. Save the document with a description that tells us what the document is about without having to open the file. Typing our name followed by the words "Cover Letter" is a good choice. Once we have typed in the file name, click on the Save button and our document will be saved (Figure 2-22).
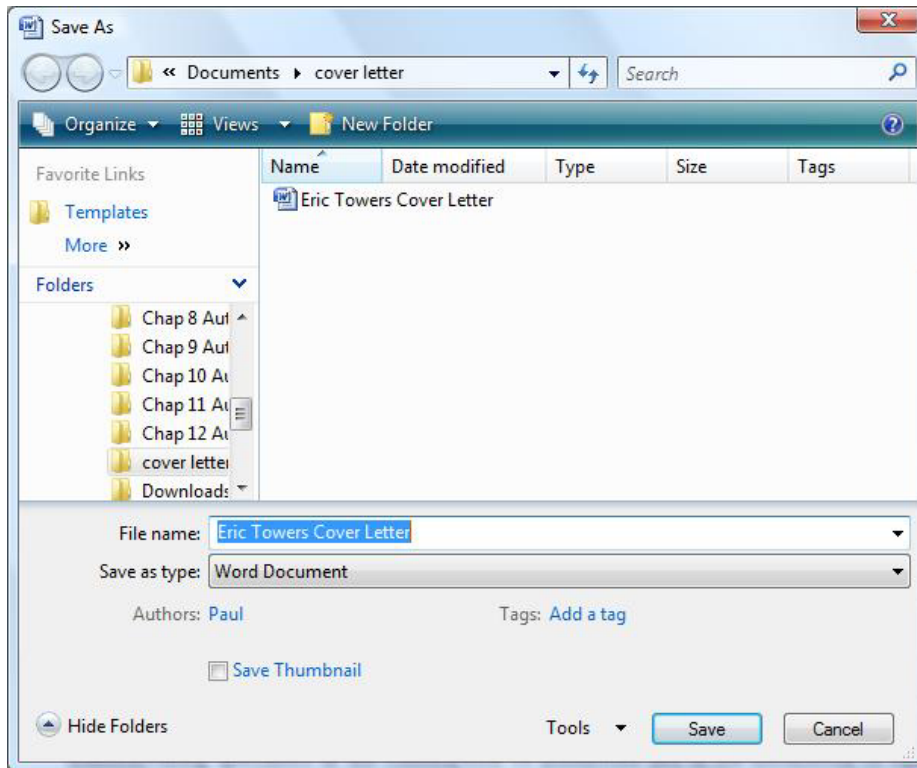
Figure 2-22– Save As Window

Figure 2-23 – Completed Cover Letter

* World Class CAD Challenge 30-01 * - Create a three paragraph cover letter, spell check and save the document in 30 minutes. Continue this drill four times, each time completing the letter under 30 minutes to maintain your World Class ranking.