

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 2010**
- **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 2010

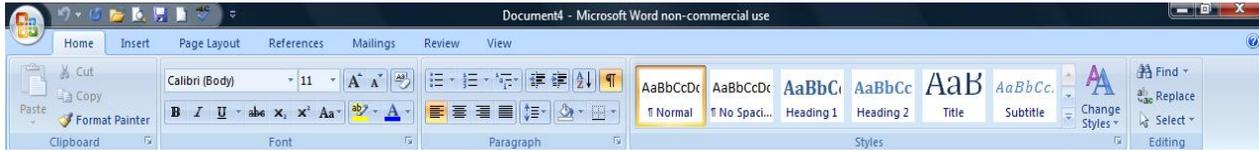


Figure 2-1 – Word 2010 Ribbon with Quick Access Toolbar

Microsoft Word 2010 continues to feature the ribbon system introduced in Word 2007 to organize program functions. All the tools are located on different panels under the several tabs located at the top of the ribbon. The Quick Access Toolbar shows only the Save and Undo tools, though this can be customized through the program’s options. One main change for Word 2010 is the addition of the File tab, which allows you to access many typical File functions such as Open, Save, Save As, New, and Exit.

Changing the Font and Font Size

When you open Microsoft Word a blank document will open so that you can immediately start typing. The **Font** panel is under the **Home** tab of the ribbon. The default font and size for Microsoft Word 2010 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 you see **Times New Roman** and select it (Figure 2-2). After picking the font, click the drop-down arrow to the right of the font style box and select a font size of **12** (Figure 2-3).

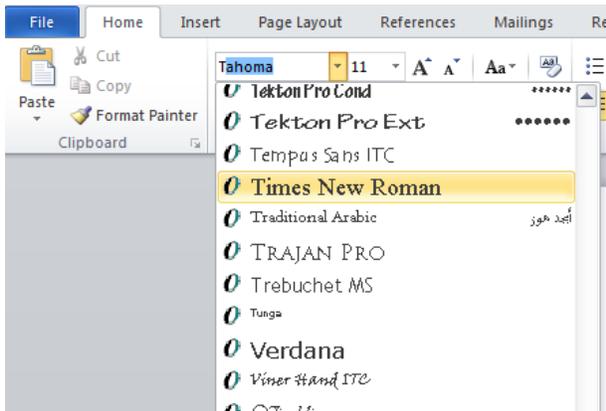


Figure 2-2 – Selecting “Times New Roman”

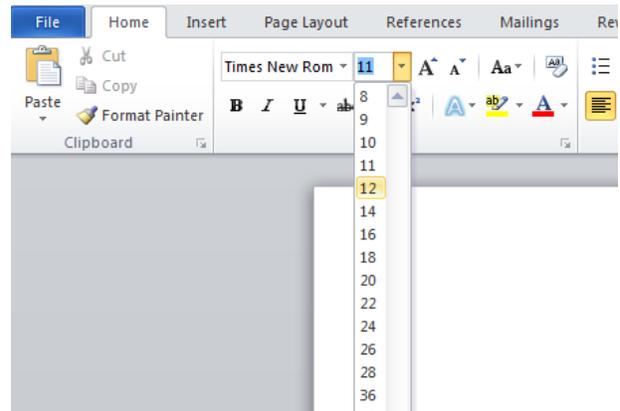


Figure 2-3 – Selecting Size “12” Font

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 you 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).

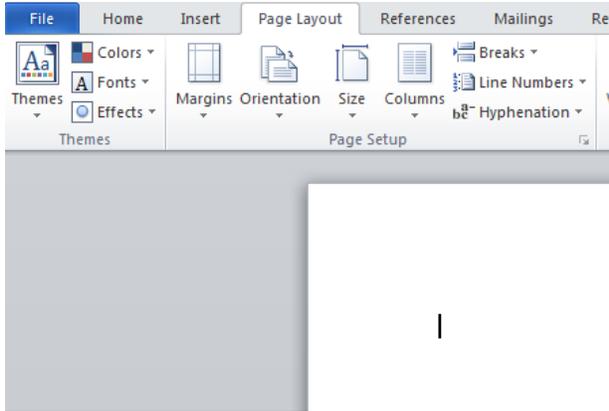


Figure 2-4 – Page Setup Panel

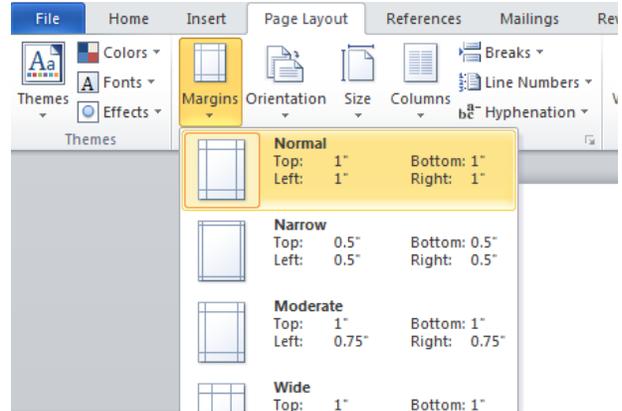


Figure 2-5 – Selecting Normal Margin Settings

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. You can either stack the information together to use up less page space or you can place the data side by side. In this lesson, you will place your contact info side by side, so you need to insert a single row, two column table at the top of the page to hold your name, return address, email and phone number.

To insert a table into your document, 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). You can also insert a table by selecting the **Insert Table** tool under the table size selection area and then specifying the number of rows and columns you want 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.

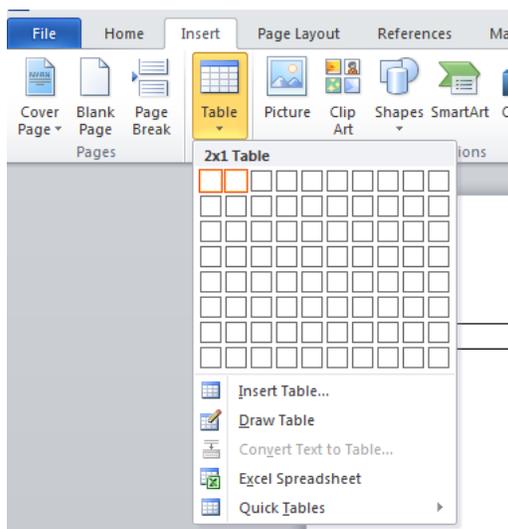


Figure 2-6 – Selecting 2x1 Table

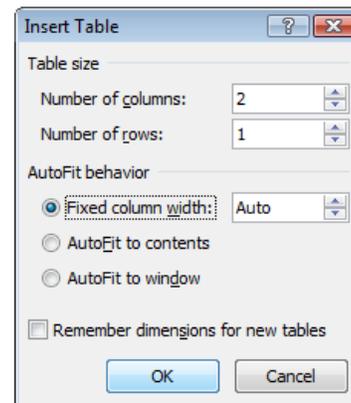
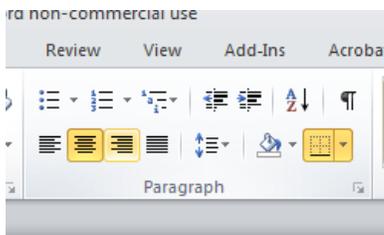


Figure 2-7 – Insert Table Window

Modifying and Adding Text to the Table

The left cell of the table will contain your name. First you need to change the font size to **16**; this will help your name stand out on the page. You can do this the same way you changed the font size from 11 to 12: click the drop-down arrow to the right of the font style box and select a font size of **16**. Next, you need to center align the text. There are four text alignment tools under the **Home** tab on the **Paragraph** panel. The first is the **Right**, followed by the **Center**, **Left** and **Justified** alignment tools (Figure 2-8). Select the **Center** tool and then type your name in the left cell of the table (Figure 2-9). In the right cell, type in your address, telephone number, and email address. In this section, you should modify the format of the text again by dropping the font size down to **10** and changing the alignment of the text to the **Right** align tool. Now type your address on the first line. Hit **Enter** and type “Telephone:” and your telephone number on the next line. Hit **Enter** again and type your email address.



Eric Towers	
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Figure 2-8 – Center and Right Align Tools

Figure 2-9 – Center Aligned Name in Left Cell

Eric Towers	9000 Round St. Columbus, OH 43215 Telephone: (614) 222-9200 etowers@gmail.com
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Figure 2-10 – Left and Right Cells with Text

Next, you are going to modify the table and its contents. Begin by selecting the left cell of the table with your cursor. Next, go to the **Layout** tab. On the **Alignment** panel there are nine different alignment settings. Pick the **Align Center** tool and your 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. Select the View Gridlines tool in the Table panel under the Layout tab to see the table’s borders.

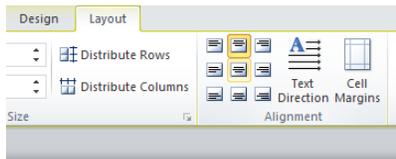


Figure 2-11 – Alignment Panel and Align Center Tool

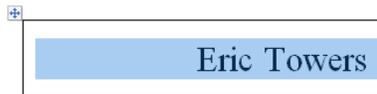


Figure 2-12 – Move Button

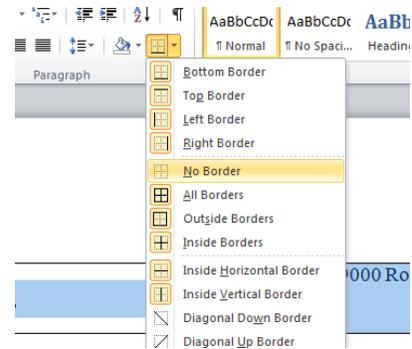


Figure 2-13 – No Border Option

Eric Towers	9000 Round St. Columbus, OH 43215 Telephone: (614) 222-9200 etowers@gmail.com
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Figure 2-14 – Completed Table Without Border

Adding the Date, Recipient’s Address and Salutation

Before you can begin entering the content of your letter, you need to modify the default paragraph spacing. Select the small arrow in the corner of the Paragraph panel under the Home tab and the Paragraph dialogue box will appear. Change the After value in the Spacing section from **10** to **0** (Figure 2-15). You can select the Set as Default option to save these changes for good or you can set this every time you open a new file. Hit OK to return to your document.

Place the cursor beneath the table and add a space by hitting **Enter**. Now type the full date; this will be the first line of your document. Make sure to type the full date and not just a 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. Hit **Enter** twice to add two lines after the date. Type in the recipient’s name, title, organization and address. After that, hit Enter twice and add a 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 communication such as a cover letter or email so avoid them in those situations. Type in all the information in shown in Figure 2-16.

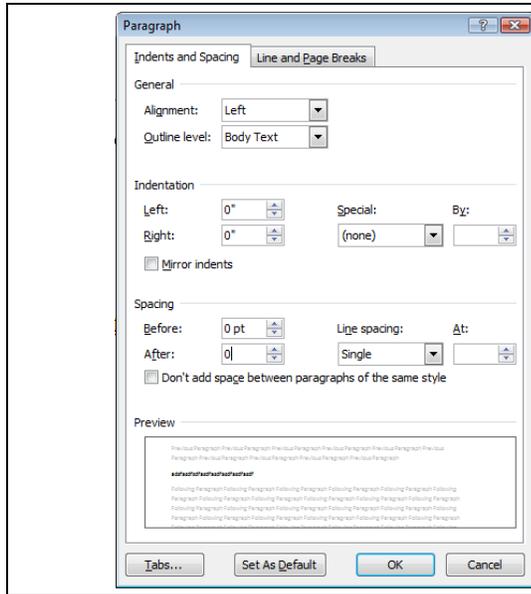


Figure 2-15 – Changing Paragraph Spacing



Figure 2-16 – Adding Date, Recipient’s Address, and Salutation

Changing the Indent for Adding Paragraphs

To change the indent of the first line of each paragraph, you 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, you can activate it by selecting the View Ruler tool at the top of the right scroll bar (Figure 2-17). Click and hold the top triangle on the ruler and drag it ½ inch to the right (Figure 2-18). Moving the triangle will make the first line of every paragraph start with a ½ inch indent.

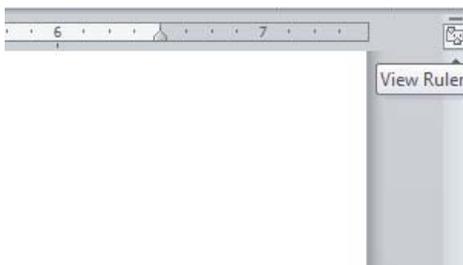


Figure 2-17 – View Ruler Tool

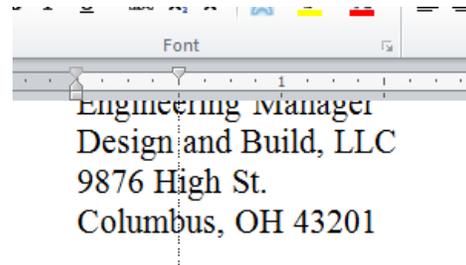


Figure 2-18 – Moving Indent ½ Inch

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 Justified alignment setting. The first paragraph should be straightforward and to the point. It should explain your purpose for writing the letter, which in this case is your application for a position. The second paragraph should explain why

you are qualified for the position and direct the reader to your strengths. The closing paragraph is the “contact me” paragraph. Make sure you include available times and days that you can be contacted as well as a phone number and email address. Your information will obviously correspond with your own purposes for writing the letter but Figure 2-19 contains a writing sample as a model.

Mr. Smith,

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 manufacturing specialists in the construction of assemblies and in the installation of equipment. I also have the 2D, 3D, and programming skills to run AutoCAD, Microstation and Solid Edge applications to complete 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 6914-222-9200 Monday through Thursday from 8 AM to 4 PM, or email me at etowers@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Figure 2-19 – Sample Writing for Cover Letter

When you type your email address, Microsoft Word will automatically add a “mailto:” hyperlink to the text. If you are sending this file electronically, including the hyperlink would allow the reader to click on the email address to instantly reply to you. However, in many cases you will be using hard copies of your letter, and the reader will not be able to click on that. So, right click on the address and select Remove Hyperlink to return the text to its original formatting (Figure 2-20).

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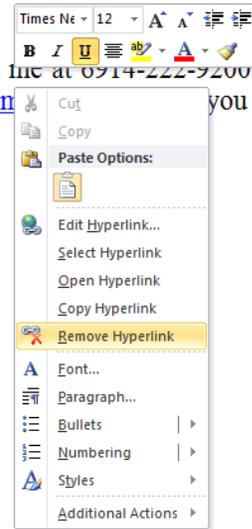


Figure 2-20 – Removing the email hyperlink

Closing the Cover Letter with Our Name and Signature

To add the closing, hit Enter twice to add a space after the last paragraph and move the ½-inch indent triangle back to its original position. With the cursor aligned on the right side of the page, type your closing. Closings such as “Sincerely,” and “Thank You,” are very appropriate for this type of letter. After typing the closing, hit Enter four times to add four spaces and then type your name and title below it (Figure 2-21). Adding four spaces between the closing words and your name will leave enough room for you to sign the letter after you print it.

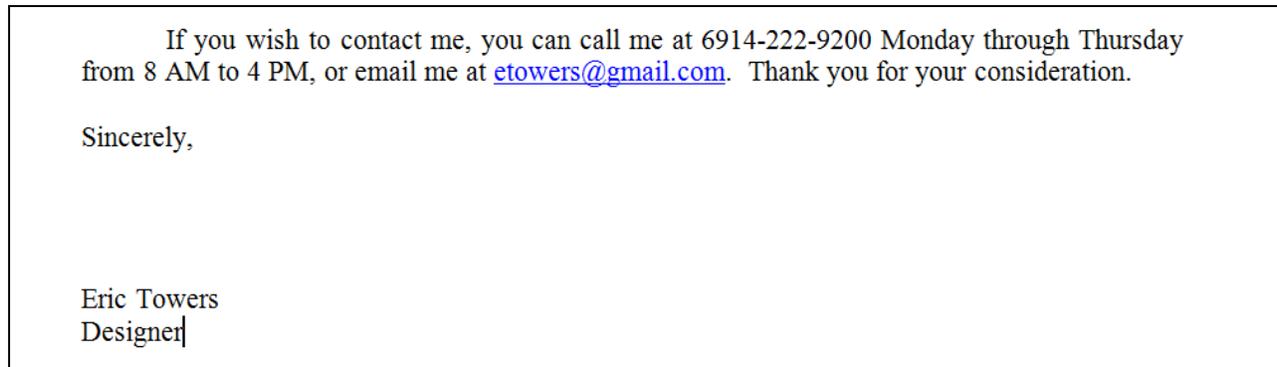


Figure 2-21 – Adding a Closing

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 you have only a few mistakes, the easiest way to correct them is to right click on the misspelled or grammatically incorrect word and the correction options will appear (Figure 2-22). If you have a number of spelling and grammar mistakes, you can select the **Spelling and Grammar** tool on the **Proofing** panel and run through the correction process on the Spelling and Grammar window that appears (Figure 2-23).

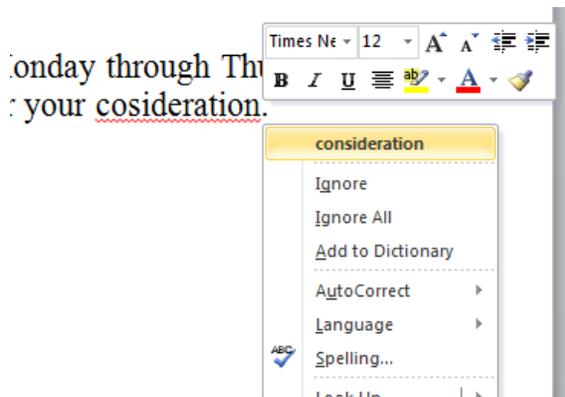


Figure 2-22 – Right Clicking to Correct

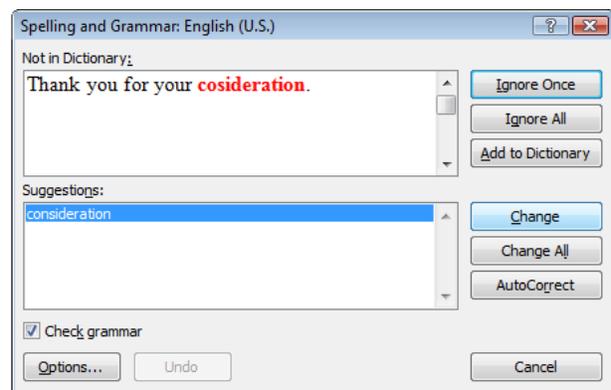


Figure 2-23 – Spelling and Grammar Window

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. You can save the file into a folder you have already created or you can create a new folder by selecting the New Folder tool. Save the document with a description of what the document is about without having to open the file. Typing your name followed by the words “Cover Letter” is a good choice. Once you have typed in the file name, click on the Save button and the document will be saved (Figure 2-24).

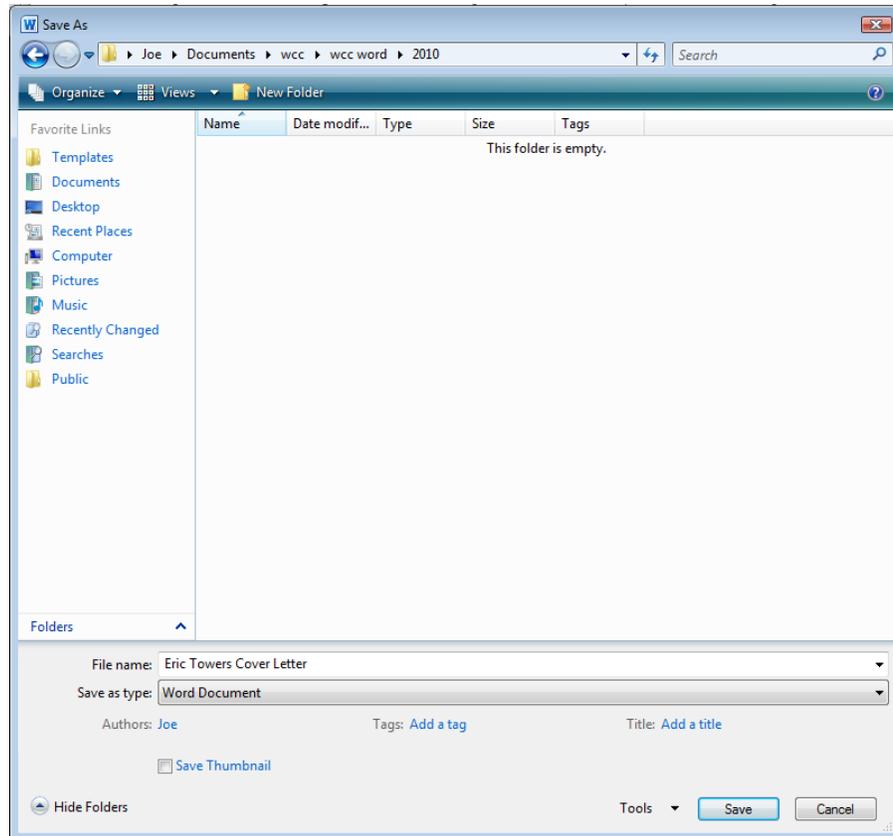


Figure 2-24– Save As Window

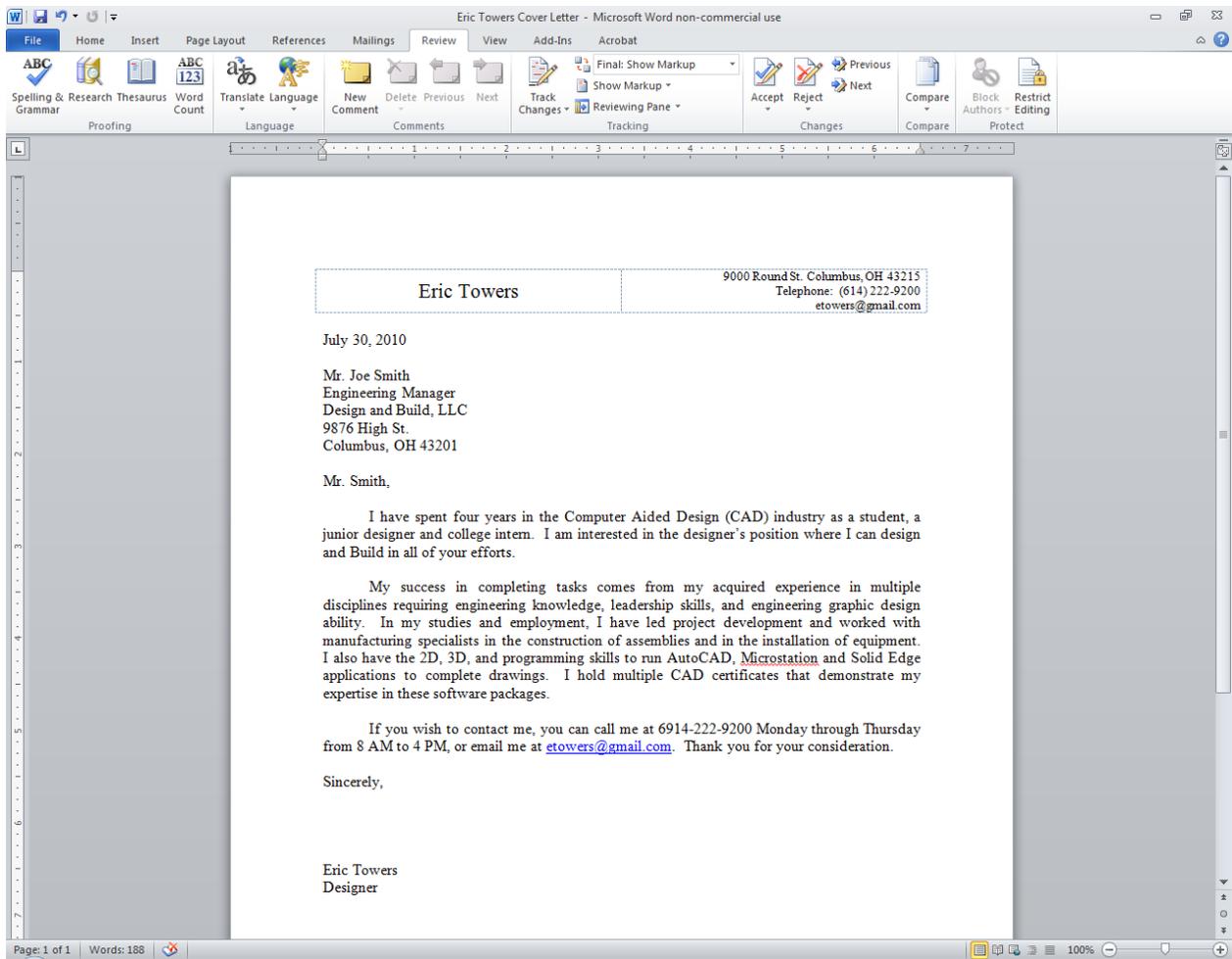


Figure 2-25 – Completed Cover Letter

*** 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 in under 30 minutes to maintain your World Class ranking.**