

Cover Letter

The cover letter is intended to introduce you and your resume to the employer. The cover letter accompanies the resume, emphasizes and expands on several key points on your resume related to the employer's needs. It has to be professional, interesting and the content must impress! It should encourage the employer to read through your resume and persuade them to meet with you to further explore your qualifications.

Cover letters must be customized for each employer. The employers want to see you demonstrate your knowledge of the company, show how you could benefit their team and provide compelling reasons why you'd like to work for them.

Do some research before starting your cover letter. Read through the "About Us" page on a company's website and/or their mission statement, browse social media channels and media sites to get more information and insight. This is also good preparation for the common questions that will often be asked such as "What do you know about our company/organization and why do you want to work for us?"

Avoid presenting information not covered in the resume. There are several reasons for this:

- In some instances a cover letter is not a requirement; if the employer chooses not to read it he or she may miss some key information about you.
- There is more emphasis placed on your resume as it serves as proof of the skills, knowledge and experience you describe in your cover letter.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Use the same font type and size as your resume; 11 or 12 point, Arial or Times New Roman
- Business letter format; left align your text
- 1 page; make sure it is concise and well-written
- Include action words and point out accomplishments
- Limit "I" sentences and run-on sentences
- Plain paper; no graphics if applying electronically
- May use point form when describing your qualifications, but do not turn the whole cover letter into point form format
- Use a cover letter to explain gaps in your resume or highlight asset points, such as ability to work flex hours, willingness to relocate, etc.
- Avoid word by word restatement of the resume
- Proofread; one grammatical error may mean that your resume or application will not be considered

Preparing a well thought-out, customized and compelling cover letter is an effective job search strategy. It can give you an advantage over other applicants.

Suggested Cover Letter Format

Name

Contact Info

Your contact information should be in the same format that you have used on your resume for consistency and branding purposes

Date of Submitting

Employer's Name

Employer's Title

Company Name

Address

Include the company contact information when possible. Consult the job posting or company website for this information.

Re: Job Title, Reference # (if applicable)

Dear Hiring Manager, (When there is no contact person)

INTRODUCTION: The introduction should answer the 4 “W’s” Who, Why, What and Where.

Who: Introduce yourself to the employer (your program of study) and start with a strong sentence that demonstrates why they should be interested in you.

Why: Indicate why you are writing and the reason you are interested in the company.

What: List the job title or describe what type of job interests you.

Where: Note whether you are responding to an advertised position or wish to be considered for a prospective opening or if you were referred to the company by a friend or a colleague.

BODY OF LETTER: Promote yourself; give a summary of your relevant experience and how they meet the employer's needs: e.g. work placements, co-op, applied research, previous employment, # years of experience, etc. Use descriptive, positive, action verbs to describe what you can do and keywords from the job posting. Highlight your strongest skills and provide further or more in-depth details about a significant accomplishment or an example that pertains to the job.

ORGANIZATION: Explain briefly why you would like to work for this employer. This paragraph lets the employer know that you have written this letter specifically for them. Demonstrate your knowledge of the company.

CLOSING: Summarize what you can do for the company. Thank the employer for their attention or consideration given. Ask for action such as a meeting to further discuss your qualifications; include your phone number and e-mail address.

Sincerely,
(Leave 4 - 6 spaces)

YOUR SIGNATURE

Your name (typewritten)