



COVER LETTER

A cover letter is either a formal letter or an e-mail that is sent to an employer in order to introduce and highlight your resume and application materials. Use your cover letter to bring your resume and portfolio to life, demonstrate your enthusiasm and creativity, and tell an employer why you are uniquely qualified for the job.

1st Paragraph - Statement of Intent

Explain clearly what type of job you are seeking and express interest in the organization.

If you are writing a solicited cover letter (responding to a specific opening), indicate how and where you learned of the opportunity and/or the organization.

If you are writing an unsolicited cover letter (not responding to an opening, but trying to create a position), start off with your solution to a problem within the company. Then state the specific position and department you would like to work in. Unsolicited cover letters usually require a lot of research.

2nd Paragraph - Summary of Qualifications

Mention one or two key qualifications you think would be of greatest interest to the employer. Tell why the organization, location, or the type of work appeals to you. Invite the reader to review your resume.

3rd Paragraph-Request for Action

Close by making a specific request for an interview. Finally, thank the employer for his or her time and consideration.

Additional Tips

- Target your letter to a particular position and organization.
- Address it to a specific individual; don't use sexist language like "Dear Gentlemen."
- Talk in terms of what you can contribute to the organization and not how it will benefit you.
- Convey focused career goals.
- Be honest and always be able to back up your claims.
- Be brief and keep it simple—one full page is probably too much.
- Remember to sign it.
- And always proofread!

Basic Format for a Cover Letter

Your Name
Your Street Address
City, State Zip Code
Telephone Number
Email Address

The way you present your contact information should mirror your resume. You may want to cut and paste your resume header here.

Month Day, Four Digit Year

Mr./Ms./Dr. Full Name
Job Title
Name of Organization
Street or P. O. Box Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name:

Opening paragraph: State why you are writing; how you learned of the organization or position, and basic information about yourself.

2nd paragraph: Tell why you are interested in the employer or type of work the employer does (Simply stating that you are interested does not tell why, and can sound like a form letter). Demonstrate that you know enough about the employer or position to relate your background to the employer or position. Mention specific qualifications which make you a good fit for the employer's needs. This is an opportunity to explain in more detail relevant items in your resume. Refer to the fact that your resume is enclosed. Mention other enclosures if such are required to apply for a position.

3rd paragraph: Indicate that you would like the opportunity to interview for a position or to talk with the employer to further discuss your qualifications or their hiring plans. If you will be in the employer's location and could offer to schedule a visit, indicate when. State that you would be glad to provide the employer with any additional information needed. Thank the employer for her/his consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your handwritten signature)

Your name typed

Enclosure(s) (refers to resume, etc.)