

Cover Letter Guide

Cover Letters

Cover letters are a vital link between the job you are applying for and your resume

The cover letter is another opportunity to highlight your skills and experience that match the employer's hiring needs.

Some helpful hints:

- Use a good quality 8½ x 11 paper that matches the paper your resume is printed on
- Remember that this is a formal written document so should be typed and formatted properly
- Keep a copy of the cover letter for your files so that you can refer back to it when the call you for an interview
- Always proofread your cover letter and ask a friend or family member to review it as well, spell check does not pick up all of your mistakes
- Make sure that you have a current date on your letter and correct address for the company

Opening Paragraph

- Refer to the job that you are applying to, if there is a competition or file number include this information as well
- Address your cover letter to a specific person or job title (eg. Human Resources Manager). If neither of these is available instead delete the salutation and reference the job title (eg. RE: Administrative Assistant Position)
- Always double check the spelling of names, even relatively simple names can have multiple options (eg. Sarah, Sara)
- Refer to how you heard about the job (online, newspaper)
- Include some research about the company, shows that you have taken the time and effort to find out what they are about

Middle Paragraph(s)

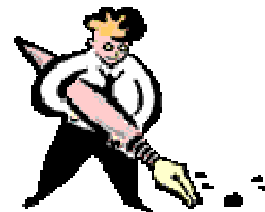
- The middle section of your resume can be made up of one or two paragraphs depending on how much detail you want to include and what skills you will be highlighting for the employer
- Address 3 – 4 skills that you have that they are looking for (use the job posting as a reference to know what skills to target)
- Always back up your skills by providing examples from real life situations that you have encountered at work, school or volunteer placements
- You have to not only state your skills, but prove them as well

Closing Paragraph

- State that you are interested in being considered for an interview
- Tell them what follow up you will be doing, are you waiting for them to contact you or will you call in a week?
- Provide your telephone and email contact in the closing paragraph in case the resume somehow becomes separated
- Be sure to type your name, leaving room above it for signing the cover letter

Ten Do's and Don'ts

1. **Don't** use a sexist salutation, such as "Dear Sir"
2. **Do** keep your letter brief. Never, Never more than one page, and it's best to keep it well under a full page. Each paragraph should have no more than one to three sentences.
3. **Don't** waste your first paragraph by writing a bland introduction. Use the first paragraph to grab the employer's attention; give the employer the reasons you are qualified for the position.
4. **Do** use simple language and uncomplicated sentence structure. Eliminate all unnecessary words.
5. **Don't** use such clichés as "Enclosed please find my resume" or "As you can see on my resume enclosed herewith." Employers can see that your resume is enclosed; they don't need you to tell them.
6. **Do** tell the employer how you can meet his or her needs and contribute to the company.
7. **Don't** send a cover letter that contains any typos, misspellings, incorrect grammar or punctuation, smudges, or grease from yesterday's lunch.
8. **Do** avoid negativity. Negativity never has a place in a cover letter.
9. **Don't** rehash your resume. You can use your cover letter to highlight the aspects of your resume that are relevant to the position, but you're wasting precious space -- and the potential employer's time -- if you simply repeat your resume.
10. **Do** use e-mail cover letters, but keep them shorter and more concise.



Cover Letter Worksheet

Your Address	
City, Province	
Postal Code	

Current Date	
--------------	--

Employer's Address	
City, Province	
Postal Code	

Salutation	
------------	--

<i>Opening Paragraph: Specify what position you are applying for and interest in the company</i>
<i>Middle Paragraph(s): Tell employer about the great skills you have for this job, give examples!!</i>
<i>Closing Paragraph: Thank them and repeat your contact information.</i>

Sincerely,	
------------	--

Space for signing your name

Name typed	
Enclosure line	