Cover Letters

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter accompanies a résumé and introduces your interest in the organization and the specific position for which you are applying. It should emphasize how you fit the company and how the company fits your qualifications. A cover letter can be delivered traditionally as a hard copy, but is also an appropriate body of an emailed résumé submission.

Cover letters can be an additional means of selling oneself to an employer. Each cover letter should be targeted to a specific company and position and reflect knowledge of the company’s needs and goals. A successful cover letter can sell the applicant to an employer, even when there is no current job opening.

A cover letter is a way of asking for an interview.

Cover Letter Basics:

- Use to complement your résumé, not repeat the same information.
- Address to a specific person. If you cannot, consider using “Dear Selection Committee”.
- Keep short, concise, and direct (3-4 paragraphs, no longer than 1 page).
- Address the employer’s concern of “Why should I call you?”.
- Proofread for grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes; ensure cover letter is addressed to correct person and company.
- Create a new cover letter for each position—mass producing is impersonal and less effective.
- Research and display knowledge of company.
- Tactfully ask for an interview.

Here is how a Cover Letter can be Written:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City, State, Zip Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of Contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Address</td>
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<td>City, State Zip Code</td>
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Dear Mr./Ms. XXXX:

State the position you are applying for and perhaps how you became aware of it and why you are interested. Give a brief synopsis of why you are a top candidate or offer a sincere compliment about the company.

Offer your sales pitch, outlining what you can do for the employer. Show credentials through specific examples that make a clear connection of how prior performance indicates excellence in the new position. Consider using bullets to outline your top skills or speak more in-depth about a qualification.

Thank the employer for their time or consideration. State your interest in meeting with the employer to follow-up. Indicate that your résumé is enclosed or attached.

Sincerely,

(written signature, blue ink) (4 blank lines)

Typed Name
Avoid Cover Letter Bloopers!

Do not let a simple error on your cover letter disqualify you!
Many students spend hours carefully writing and editing their resumes, only to quickly type up a brief cover letter to accompany it. Most end up sloppy, unprofessional, and with glaring and embarrassing errors.

Forgetting to update your cover letter to include the new company or individual’s name will not win points with employers.

Be sure all information is relevant and correct for each company, including organization and individual names, position titles, and credentials.

Sample for Jason Student

May 10, 2015

Dear Mr. Butler,

I am aware through Robbie Johnson, your company receptionist, that as a result of your recent expansion you are looking to hire an accounts manager for your new Layton office. I believe I am an excellent candidate for this position, as I have completed a successful internship in business management and offer three years experience in sales.

Some of my deliverable highlights for my current employer include:

• Assisting in the development of ten new accounts in less than six months, increasing company revenues by 25%
• Demonstrating analytical skills and problem-solving ability under pressure from disgruntled customers with a 100% positive resolution rate for the 4th Quarter of 2010
• Awarded for delivering top quality customer service and increasing customer loyalty by 50%

I have enclosed my resume and want to express my enthusiasm for this position. I would appreciate the opportunity to interview with you and discuss how I can offer the same dependable, high quality service to your customers. I will phone you by the end of the week to schedule an appointment that suits your calendar. If you prefer to speak before then, please call or email me using the contact information below.

Sincerely,

Jason Student
Jason@email.com, 555-555-5555