



COVER LETTERS

A cover letter is a formal letter that states the position for which you are applying and describes your most important, relevant qualifications. Every time you send out a resume, you should include a cover letter.

FORMAT AND CONTENT

- Cover letters should be one page in length and approximately three paragraphs long. The letter should be written in a professional business format and printed on the same paper as your resume.
- Cover letters should be specific and targeted to each position. Read through the job or internship description and use the cover letter to describe how your experiences and skills relate to that opportunity. Make sure to highlight requested qualifications that you possess.
- Cover letters are generally more effective when addressed to an actual person rather than “To Whom It May Concern.” Be sure to find out the name and title of the person who should receive your cover letter.
- Follow a formal letter format. The letter heading should include your return address, the date, the person to which you are sending the letter, and the business address. That should be followed by the appropriate salutation.

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- Clearly identify the position for which you are applying.
- If you are answering an ad or job posting, state where you heard about the opening.
- If someone referred you to the position, mention that person’s name.
- If you do not know whether the employer has an opening, indicate the type of position you are seeking.
- Most importantly, showcase the research you have done on the job and the company. Show the reader your knowledge of the organization in the context of why you want the job.

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- The second paragraph of the letter serves as your outlet to explain your qualifications and why you are interested in the position and the company.
- Do not simply repeat your resume, but instead highlight specific examples from your resume and experience and tell how this experience qualifies you for the position.
- Tell more of a story here than in your resume.

PARAGRAPH THREE

- The concluding paragraph is an opportunity for you to ask the employer to follow up by contacting you to schedule an interview or for you to state that you will contact the employer to request an interview.
- At the end, you must include a signature block. Be sure to sign the letter if you are mailing or faxing it.

QUICK TIPS:

- Proof read. Incorrect spelling and bad grammar leave a very negative impression. If possible, have someone else review your letter as well. Sometimes it is hard to catch mistakes in your own work because you read what you want to be there as opposed to what is actually written.
- Take advantage of this opportunity to advertise for yourself! This is your chance to tell how you can contribute to this company. If you are excited about the job, tell them that.



- Do your homework on the company. Again, use the letter to show the reader your knowledge of the organization in the context of why you want the job.

THANK YOU LETTERS:

- A thank you letter should always be sent to individuals who have provided assistance to you during the job process. Sending a thank you letter within twenty four hours via email will set you apart from the candidates who fail to do so. It will also give you the opportunity to reiterate any of your qualifications or provide additional information. If you meet with a group of people, you can just write a letter to your host and have them extend your gratitude. A follow-up hand written letter is a nice touch.