

## Cover Letters

---

The purpose of a cover letter is to show how your background fits a particular job in the organization you are interested in. You are also demonstrating to a prospective employer that you are the right person for the position and that you have a specific interest in working for that organization.

---

### Basic Guidelines

- Research the employer

How can you demonstrate that you are the right person for the job (or the organization) without knowing something about the job or organization?

- Address the letter to an individual by name or title

If you don't know their name, your greeting should be appropriate for either gender: "Dear Personnel Manager" OR "Dear Sir or Madam" (usually too formal nowadays)

- Incorporate your job objective into the letter, especially if you have not included it in your resume.
- Be brief! One of the most common and aggravating errors in cover letter writing is being too wordy.
- Highlight how you can contribute to the organization you are applying to.
- Proofread the letter for mistakes; make sure your grammar and punctuation is correct. It is a good idea to ask someone else to proofread as well.
- Remember to sign your letter!

### Content Suggestions

#### Opening Paragraph

- Avoid typical openings! The most important sentence in your cover letter is the first one. Be creative! If you don't grab their attention, chances are they won't give you any. If you don't grab their attention, chances are they won't give you any. If you are stuck, here are some ideas to get you started:
- You have been referred by [???] and are very impressed by the information they gave you.
- You are impressed by the organization's products, facilities, reputation, etc., and you want to be a part of their success.
- You are seeking a position with a smaller organization in order to gain a broad perspective about all of the functions of an organization in that field.
- You are seeking a position with a large organization in order to be allowed the opportunity to specialize.

#### Middle Paragraph

- This is where you emphasize what you can contribute to the organization by clearly calling attention to your particular experiences and abilities which relate to the position you are seeking. What are you the ideal person for this job?
- Indicate any special skills, training, or elements of your education or experience which relate to the position you are seeking.
- Address any specific requirements of the job. If you don't have all the requirements, skills or aptitudes for the job, you might want to state that you are looking forward to the 'challenge' of acquiring said requirements, skills and aptitudes.
- Do not duplicate information from your resume. Employers do not want to read the same information twice. Find a new way to highlight the most important aspects of your resume.
- Be brief!

## Closing Paragraph

- Request an interview, or try a polite yet assertive approach like: “I will contact you by [give date] to ensure you have received this application and to answer any questions you might have at that time...”

Or

- I will contact you by [give date] to discuss my interests further...”

Remember to include your phone number and the hours when you can be reached and thank the employer for taking the time to review/consider your application.

Don't forget to sign your letter!

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.  
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.