

## [Cover Letter]

A cover letter is a basic business letter that showcases

- your understanding of the industry/organization you are applying for and
- how your experience and education, reflected in your resume, can directly benefit the organization.

While your resume will likely be tailored for a specific type of position, your cover letter should be adapted for the specific organization to which you are applying.

Use the job description in the company's advertisement to construct the skills you wish to highlight in your resume. Use specific examples of how you have utilized your skills.

### Basic Format

Name

Address

City, State Zip

**Tip: Using the same header as your resume provides consistency.**

### Date Written

Name of Addressee

Title

Company Name

Address

City, State Zip

**Tip: If you do not have a contact within the organization, address your letter to the appropriate hiring office, such as Human Resources Department.**

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name or Hiring Manager for [position],

In the first paragraph, you should identify the position you are applying for, and how you were directed to the position. If you received a personal reference, identify them by name. Provide your primary skills or experience that would directly benefit the position. If you are applying for a position based on your expected or recent graduation, mention your degree program and expected or recent graduation date.

In the second paragraph, focus on 4-5 skills that are being sought by the employer that you possess. Expand on your resume by providing specific examples of how you used those skills in your previous employment, or while a volunteer, intern, or student. Be sure to use the language used by the organization to describe the qualities you possess. Do not restate information directly from your resume, or refer the employer to your resume.

In the third paragraph, thank the reader for their consideration in considering your application. If you have the ability to follow-up, be sure to discuss when and how (phone/e-mail/person) you would like to do so. If the position requires you to relocate, or you are currently employed, provide information on your availability and flexibility.

Sincerely,

Your Name

### **Applying On-Line**

Even when applying on-line or by e-mail, you will want to include a cover letter. A cover letter maximizes your ability to connect with the hiring agent. When applying by e-mail, the content of your cover letter should remain the same. Do not attach your cover letter, but use it as the text of your e-mail. Remove the employer address, but maintain your name and contact information in a format that matches your resume.

When applying on-line, there are a number of different requirements that you may experience. Some forms do not allow for a cover letter to be included. However, many companies do provide the option to attach either a Cover Letter or provide an open section for Additional Documents. Take advantage of these options to include the additional information your cover letter provides.