

LAKE ERIE

COLLEGE

OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

COVER LETTER

A cover letter accompanies your resume and introduces you and your skills and qualifications to potential employers and organizations for employment or other opportunities. It is the first document an employer may see, so it is important to make a positive first impression!

Getting Started

- **Deconstruct the job description**—Underline key qualifications and responsibilities of the position. Watch for repetition of key words. Tailor your cover letter to the job description.
- **Assess your fit with the position**—Identify the skills and experiences you possess that directly relate to the position. Highlight these skills using examples in your letter. Stress how the employer will benefit from these skills and experiences and how you will be an asset to the company.
- **Research the organization**—Customize the cover letter to the organization and position. Check out the company website, search for news articles featuring the company—do your homework!

Good Cover Letters...

Use a Personal Approach—It is important to personalize your cover letter as employers do not look favorably upon cover letters that appear to be mass produced. Show the employee that you have done research on the company. Generic or form letters have a less chance of getting you an interview.

Address a Specific Contact—Try to address your cover letter to a specific individual within the organization instead of saying “To Whom it May Concern.” If you are unable to find the appropriate contact’s name, you can begin the letter with a salutation such as “Dear Recruiter.”

Are Clear and Concise—Cover letters for jobs outside of academia should never exceed one page in length. It is also customary to single space text and double space between paragraphs. Remember to use high-quality paper that matches your resume. Some individuals use a consistent heading on the cover letter and resume, and this can help unify the two documents. Also, remember to write as concisely and effectively as possible since cover letters are a sample of your writing ability. Have at least one other person proofread your letter.

Content of a Cover Letter

Use this format to help guide your cover letter writing

Your Contact Information (could also be your personal contact header from resume)

Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Date

Employer Contact Information

Name

Title

Company

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Salutation

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name: (address to title if do not have a name)

First Paragraph

The first paragraph of your letter should include information on why you are writing. Mention the position you are applying for and where you found the job listing. Include the name of a mutual contact, if you have one. Briefly state why you are interested in working for this employer/organization.

Middle Paragraph(s)

The next section of your cover letter should describe what you have to offer the employer. Mention specifically how your qualifications match the job you are applying for. Remember, you are interpreting your resume, not repeating it. Use phrases or buzz words from the job description. Make connections between your experience and the responsibilities of the position. Mention your interest in working for this employer/organization.

Final Paragraph

Conclude your cover letter by thanking the employer for considering you for the position. Include information on how you will follow-up. If the job posting requests salary requirements, include in this paragraph- **ONLY WHEN REQUESTED!**

Complimentary Close

Respectfully yours, or Sincerely,

Signature (Handwritten Signature -for a mailed letter)

Typed Signature

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