

The Structure of a Cover Letter¹

SUU Writing Center

(last updated 08/18/2004)

The following format shows a description and sample layout of a basic letter. You might use this letter structure when applying for a job or for future schooling.

****Letter Template****

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State ZIP

Date of Letter

Employer's Name
Employer's Title
Company Name
Company Address
Company City, State ZIP

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss (Name):

Section 1:

This paragraph indicates the position you are applying for, how you heard about it, and why you want it. (Approximately 3-4 sentences.)

Section 2:

This paragraph is the heart of the letter. It is here that you should distill your qualifications for the position. You should not simply restate what is listed in your resume; instead, you should expound on specific experiences that qualify you for the job. Be sure to include information about the skills you possess as they relate to the job. Remember, you only have one paragraph, so be as concise and descriptive as possible.

Section 3:

The third and final paragraph should “pave the way” for the interview. You should state when you will contact the employer about the job (DO NOT leave the “ball in their court”; you should contact them, not ask them to call you). You should also bring the letter to a satisfactory conclusion and thank the reader for his/her time.

Sincerely,

(Your Signature)



(4 spaces)

Your Name Typewritten

Enclosure (This notation indicates that resume is enclosed with the letter.)

¹ Information for this tip sheet was found at <http://www.nextsteps.org/resume/coverform.html>.