

Writing a Cover Letter

Level: OBS
LBS 5



Goal: Create a Cover Letter using Word '97.

Learning Outcomes:

- Create a properly formatted Cover Letter using Word '97.
- Learn what to include in a cover letter.

Contents:

- Cover letters
 - a) Parts of a cover letter
 - b) Information to include
 - c) Format of a cover letter
 - d) Sample cover letters

Prerequisite:

- Basic skills in word processing

WRITING A COVER LETTER

Your résumé should have a good cover letter attached as a personal communication or introduction to the individual who receives your résumé. Be sure to include:

- 1. Your name and address**
 - either as letterhead - like the one on your résumé
 - or as a return address in the upper left hand corner.
 - (Do not include your name in the return address; it is typed below your signature.)
- 2. The date**
 - just below the return address or letterhead
- 3. The inside address**
 - the name and address of the person and company to whom you are sending your résumé.
 - Write the address as you will on the envelope.
 - Include the name and title of the person receiving résumés
- 4. The salutation**
 - Dear Ms_____ : (followed by a colon)
 - Make an effort to find out who is doing the hiring.
 - If necessary, guess at '*Dear Selection Committee*'
 - Avoid '*To whom it may concern*' or '*Dear Sir or Madam*'
- 5. The body**
 - Three or four paragraphs (See the next page.)
- 6. Closing**
 - Sincerely, or Yours truly,
 - Only the first word is capitalized.
 - It is followed by a comma
 - Sign your name
 - Type your name below the signature.

THE BODY OF A COVER LETTER

Opening Paragraph

- Explain why you are writing
For example
 - in response to an advertisement,
 - at the suggestion of someone who works there
 - because of an interest in the company
- Express your interest and enthusiasm for this kind of work.

One or two Paragraphs

- Tell why you want to work for the company
- Tell what skills / qualifications / experience you can bring to the job
- Be specific about the position you are applying for and about your skills and experiences that relate to the position.
- Make a personal link to the company - i.e. name drop
For example, “My neighbour, Norm Jackson, who works in your warehouse.....”
- Set yourself apart; identify a unusual skill or special talent that you have – something that relates to the job but makes you unique

Closing Paragraph

- Show your interest in meeting with the employer.
- Take the initiative about the next step if possible
For example “*I’ll call your office next week to see if we could meet...*”
- Restate where you can be reached – i.e. your phone number

POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT A COVER LETTER

- Cover letters should be only one page
- Be brief and to the point
- Highlight the most important skills; don’t repeat the whole résumé
- Avoid generic phrases such as “*Enclosed, please find....*”
- Use paper and a font that matches your résumé.
- Proofread carefully; then get someone else to proofread
- Use this chance to sell yourself and to get the employer to read your résumé

The Cover Letter

Use 1" (2.5) cm
margins all the way

Your Present Address
City, Province
Postal Code

Date

Leave 1 line space
between the date and

Leave 2-3 lines between
the date and the inside

Name of Recruiter
Title of Recruiter
Name of Organization
Street Address
City, Province, Postal Code

Get the full name and
complete information as

Dear Mr./Ms. (Recruiter's last name):

Be formal - no first names
Use a colon here

Opening Paragraph- Your opening paragraph should gain the interest of the potential employer. Tell why you are writing. Name the position or general vocational area about which you are asking. Tell how you learned of the opening or organization and why you are interested in the organization.

Middle Paragraph(s)- This paragraph should create a desire to read further. Provide additional information concerning your education, experience, qualities, and interests as they relate to the position. Describe one or two qualifications you think would be of the greatest interest to the employer, keeping in mind the employer's point of view. If you have related experience or special training, be sure to point it out. Tell the employer specifically what you have to offer the organization and support your claim with proof/examples.

Closing Paragraph- In your closing paragraph ask for action. Tell the employer you look forward to hearing from him/her and restate how you can be reached. Be sure to emphasize your appreciation for their time.

Sincerely (or Yours truly),

Capitalize only the first
word

(Your hand-written signature)

Type Your Name here

Encl.

Encl. indicates that you have
enclosed a resume and/or

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

555 Houghton Road
Erinsville, ON
S3S 6S8

November 2, 2001

Mr. Simon Diaz
Saccharine Confections
89 Lochman Line
Brampton, ON
J8K 9L7

Dear Mr. Diaz:

Your advertisement in the *National Baker Times* appealed to me for two reasons. You plan to open up a new branch of Saccharine Confections; I seek the opportunity to manage a newly opened store. I am also interested in building my career in the food industry. Therefore, I have decided to submit my resume in application for the position of Store Manager.

My relevant experience includes three years as a candy chef for Sticky Sweets in Brighton and my current position as assistant store manager of Licorice and Lollipops in Orangeville.

I look forward to discussing opportunities at Saccharine Confections with you. I will call you next week to make sure you have received my resume and to set up a mutually agreeable time for us to speak.

Yours truly,

Caroline Fenway
Enclosure: Résumé

LUCY LU WANG

123 Downing Street,
Erinsville, ON K9D 3W7

Phone: 123-456-7890
Email: lucyl@bamboo.com

June 2, 2001

Amber Press
333 Fairfield Avenue.
Kingston, ON
K9J 4R2

Re: Freelance Editor Position

I found your job posting in the *Kingston Weekly Times* last Monday. I am a freelance writer / editor with experience in children's books, very similar to what the job posting asks for.

In addition to reading the enclosed resume, please take a look at my writing samples at www.lucywang.com. I am also happy to send you hard copies of my work.

My schedule typically allows for about 25 hours of freelance work a week. I would be delighted if that could be consumed with children's projects for Amber Press.

I can be reached at the number above or at my email address. Thank you for responding to my application.

Sincerely,

Lucy Lu Wong
Enclosure: Résumé