



Cover Letter Guide

The cover letter is an important document. It serves three primary purposes:

1. It provides an opportunity for you to express your interest and qualifications for the position and organization
2. It allows you to draw parallels between your experience and the requirements of the position
3. It demonstrates your writing skills and professionalism

Dos and Don'ts

Do...

- ✓ Write a separate cover letter for each job
- ✓ Target your letter to position and organization
- ✓ Focus on your skills and employers needs
- ✓ Limit length to one page
- ✓ Use the same paper and font as your resume
- ✓ Have someone else proofread your letter
- ✓ Address your letter to a specific person whenever possible

Don't...

- ✓ Discuss skills or experiences you lack
- ✓ Use a form letter
- ✓ Forget to include your contact information

Cover Letter Structure

Your Home Address
City, State Zip Code
Phone Number

Current Date

Employer's Name
Title
Organization
Street Address
City, State, zip Code

Dear Mr., Ms., Dr. _____:

FOR AN ADVERTISED JOB OPENING:

First Paragraph: Briefly introduce yourself. Tell your contact what you want, how you know about his/her organization, and how you learned about the job opening. Try to trigger the reader's attention with an interesting first sentence.

Second Paragraph: Give a concise overview of your work history and skills you possess have that will help your performance at this job. Do not go into as much detail as in your resume. Refer him/her to the enclosed resume for more information.

Third Paragraph: State your confidence in your abilities and give information on how you can be contacted.

Final Paragraph: Express appreciation of his/her consideration, and mention that you are looking forward to hearing form or meeting him/her.

WHEN NO CURRENT OPENINGS ARE KNOWN:

First Paragraph: Briefly introduce yourself. If another person referred you to the reader, mention the name of your referent and why you are specifically writing to this reader and organization.

Second Paragraph: State that you are exploring employment opportunities in your field. State clearly that you would like to obtain advice, suggestions, and information about position in this field, and that you do not expect the reader to know of any available job openings at this time. Be specific about your reasons for wanting to meet the reader. You may wish to enclose a resume, or you can take one to the meeting.

Third Paragraph: State that you will call on a certain day to arrange a brief meeting at his/her convenience.

Final Paragraph: Express appreciation of his/her consideration and assistance, and mention that you are looking forward to hearing form or meeting him/her.

Sincerely,

(signature in blue or black ink)

Full name typed

Enclosure (Alert your reader to the fact that another document accompanies your letter.)