

# COVER LETTER TIPS

Cover letters are letters of application that supplement and accentuate information on the resume. They should be written with the reader's interest in mind. Direct particular attention toward specific skills and use concrete examples. Make sure you clearly stated why you are interested in the company, what you have to offer, and how you can contribute.

## Two types of Cover Letters:

### 1. Letter of Application

This letter is written in response to a specific job within an organization, which has been advertised or identified through networking.

### 2. Letter of Inquiry

A letter of inquiry is sent to explore employment possibilities when you are interested in working for a particular organization but do not know if an opening exists. Target an employer's needs by researching the organization to obtain information about jobs for which you are qualified. Refer to the specific aspects of the organization's work that interest you (mission, culture, clients/students, etc). Include this information in a separate paragraph.

## COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

- Never send a resume without a cover letter (unless directed)
- It should be concise and no more than one page with three to four pages maximum.
- Use 12 point, Times New Roman Font (font can be 11 point except for corporate jobs)
- Use .8-1 point. (for corporate jobs, font must be 1 inch)
- Use the same identifying information format for resume and cover letter
- Address your cover letter to the recruiter/hiring manager. If you do not know the name of the appropriate individual, call the organization and request the proper contact person's name and title.
- Double check spelling of contact names and titles.
- Tell an employer why they will benefit from hiring you not what you are going to gain from them
- Use action verbs
- Use your own words; you do not want your cover letter to sound like it was copied from a book or the internet
- Let your letter reflect your professionalism, individuality and creativity
- Demonstrate your abilities with concrete examples.
- Check for spelling and grammar mistakes. Spelling, typographical, and grammatical errors are unacceptable.
- Sign your letters in blue or black ink.
- How to send it
  - As an Email, the cover letter should be the body of the email message and (attach your cover letter and resume as two separate MS Word or PDF attachments or follow employers directions).
  - Standard mail, the cover letter should be printed on resume paper (match paper used for resume). Do not staple your resume to your cover letter
  - Fax on standard paper (resume should follow)

**Use the same heading that is on your resume or CV**

*2 spaces*

Date

*4 Spaces*

Name

Title

Organization

Street Address or PO Box #

City, State, Zip Code

*2 Spaces*

Dear Mr./Ms \_\_\_\_\_:

*1 Space*

**1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph:** State why you are writing by identifying the position, field or general area of your inquiry. Tell the employer how you heard of the opening or organization. Be specific: tell them that the job was listed on TCCS LINK. If you were referred by someone, include that person's first and last name. Let the employer know the degree you will receive or received, the graduate school you are attend or attended, the type of license/certification you will be eligible for or have, and that your resume is attached.

*1 Space*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph:** Include a sentence that introduces your overall areas of expertise which illustrates that you are qualified for this position (this sentence can also be included as the closing sentence of your first paragraph). Indicate why you are particularly suited for this company and this position by reviewing the job description. Highlight your relevant achievements and qualifications. Elaborate on key points from your resume without repeating your resume word-for-word. Be specific by providing examples from your current and/or past work experience, volunteer experience, academic, or training. Avoid "I feel" and "I believe" phrases.

*1 Space*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph**

Include two or three of your skills that relate to the position and how the population will benefit from these skills. Let the employer know that you are available for questions about your background and experience. Thank the employer for his/her consideration. Include your phone number and email address (same contact information listed on your resume)

*2 Spaces*

Sincerely,

*3 Spaces*

Your Name Typed