

OUTLINE COVER LETTER (LETTER OF APPLICATION OR INQUIRY)

(Single spaced)

(Down far enough so the letter is centered on the page)

Your street address

City, State Zip code

Date (you are writing/ sending the letter)

(2-4 spaces)

Name of person to whom you are writing (address the letter to a specific person if possible; if not, use a non-gender specific title such as "Employment Manager" or "Human Resources Representative")

Person's title (may also go on the Name line if title is one word)

Name of the company or organization

Street address

City, state zip code

(1 space)

Dear Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr. Last name (do not use a first name):

(1 space)

Opening paragraph: State the purpose of your letter and get the reader's attention. Name the position or type of work for which you are applying/inquiring. Explain how you heard about the opening or the organization (Career Services office, news media, friend or formal referral). If someone referred you to the person or organization and you have her or his permission, say so (i.e., Dr. Jones of the Computer Science Department at the University of Minnesota Duluth suggested I contact you). To personalize the letter and to show that you have a good reason to want to work for them, say something you know about the company, without stating the obvious.

(1 space)

Body (1-2 paragraphs): State how you are qualified for the position. When writing a letter of application, use the language and words of the job posting to state specifically how you meet, or exceed, the qualifications and requirements the employer is seeking. Explain what you can do for the employer. Expand on your resume, mentioning specific details without simply repeating the information. Use concrete, specific examples to explain how your education, experiences and other qualifications support your ability to succeed in the position. **Avoid mentioning how the position will benefit you and the experience you'll gain.** The employer wants to know what you can do for the company, now. If the paragraph is too long, break it into two paragraphs.

(1 space)

Closing paragraph: The purpose of the letter is to apply for a position; the next step in the application process is to get an interview. Ask for an interview at the employer's convenience. Indicate how and when you may be contacted. If you are writing a letter of inquiry, indicate that you will call the employer to arrange an interview time (i.e., I will contact you during the week of November 10 to set up a time when we may further discuss how my skills and abilities may benefit your organization).

(1 space)

Write a brief expression of your appreciation.

(1 space)

Sincerely,

(4 spaces for your handwritten signature)

Your word processed name (exactly as you sign it and as it appears on your resume)

Enclosure