



# FRONTENAC EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTRE

## COVER LETTERS

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**EMPLOYMENT  
ONTARIO**

## COVER LETTER BASICS

### What is a cover letter?

The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce you to a potential employer. It is used when you are not meeting a potential employer in person first. A cover letter should always be written specifically to the job you are applying for and be personally addressed to the person in charge of the hiring process. A cover letter reveals how you communicate, organize and present yourself to a prospective employer.

### Cover Letter Do's

1. Include your address, the date and the complete address of the receiver.
2. Try to obtain the name of the person receiving the job applications.
3. Do state what position you are applying for and how you found out about it.
4. Use the first paragraph to grab the employer's attention; give the employer a reason to keep reading.
5. Keep the cover letter brief, never more than 1 page and 3 - 5 paragraphs.
6. Make sure that there are no spelling or grammatical mistakes.
7. Use high quality paper when hand delivering or mailing your cover letter and resume.
8. Always send an original letter, never a photocopy.
9. Tailor the letter to the needs of the company. Show how your skills and experience match the requirements of the position.
10. Give examples that support your experience and qualifications.
11. Let your enthusiasm and interest in the prospective position show.
12. State your wish for an interview to discuss the position further.
13. Describe how you can be reached and give a phone number.
14. Sign your name!

### Cover Letter Don't's

1. Rehash your resume. Use your cover letter to highlight aspects of your resume that are most relevant to the position.
2. Depend on the employer to take action. Request action. Whenever possible follow up with the employer to arrange an interview time. You will greatly increase your chances of getting interviews if you call the employer after writing.

# COVER LETTER FORMAT

You may use the contact header from your resume to create a uniform look to your application.

Avoid "Dear Sir or Madam." Some research may be needed to learn correct name.

Try for a power opening/ attention grabber.

Avoid overusing 'I'. Push their 'hot' buttons by placing emphasis on your most relevant attributes and making clear what precisely you can do for them. A bulleted format is also acceptable.

"Closing and Call to Action." Be professional and state how you will initiate your next move.

Sign your letter. Encl. indicates your resume is enclosed.

Name  
Address  
City, Province  
Postal Code  
Telephone  
E-mail

Date

Name of Contact  
Correct Title or Position  
Name of Company/Organization  
Address  
City, Province  
Postal Code

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. (his or her name)  
or Human Resources or Hiring Manager

**Opening Paragraph:** State why you are writing; specify position or type of work for which you are applying. Mention how you found the opening. Talk about the company.

**Middle Paragraph (s):** Relate your skills, interests, knowledge and abilities to the needs of the employer; point out your relevant training, education and experience. Be specific and show how you have used the required skills in the past and how your skills match the requirements of the job.

Demonstrate knowledge of the company gained from research to show genuine interest in working for the company. Tell the employer how you can contribute to the organization.

**Closing Paragraph:** Use an appropriate closing to pave the way for an interview. If you state you will contact them to arrange a time, be sure to follow through. Thank them for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
*signature*  
Type your name.  
Encl.

# COVER LETTER SAMPLE A

**Jennifer White**

100 Kingston Road, Sydenham, ON K0H 2T0 jennifergwhite@yahoo.ca 613-456-7890

January 11, 2010

Jason Brown, Office Manager  
ABC Company,  
154 Queen Street,  
Kingston, ON  
K7M 1X1

Dear Mr. Brown,

My interest in the position of **Executive Assistant** recently posted on ABC Company's website has prompted me to forward my resume for your consideration. The recent news of ABC's initiatives in green technology makes your company very attractive, as environmental sustainability is an important personal value of mine. I am also confident that my experience, skills and abilities are an excellent match for your requirements.

I am a professional individual with experience in administration, organization, documentation, communication and cost control. I am detailed-oriented and focused on meeting quality standards and timelines. I enjoy interacting with clients and believe that providing quality individual service is an important asset to an organization's client relationships. My administrative skills include a 70 wpm typing speed and proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook and Access. I work well in a fast-paced environment and enjoy new challenges.

I look forward to meeting you and discussing ABC Company's needs and my qualifications at a mutually convenient time. I will contact you the week of January 18th to follow up. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer White  
Encl.

## COVER LETTER SAMPLE B

**Jennifer White**

100 Kingston Road, Sydenham, ON K0H 2T0 jennifergwhite@yahoo.ca 613-456-7890

January 11, 2010

Jason Brown, Office Manager  
ABC Company,  
154 Queen Street,  
Kingston, ON  
K7M 1X1

Dear Mr. Brown,

My interest in the position of **Executive Assistant** recently posted on ABC Company's website has prompted me to forward my resume for your consideration. The recent news of ABC's initiatives in green technology makes your company very attractive, as environmental sustainability is an important personal value of mine. I am also confident that my qualifications are an excellent match for your requirements. They include:

- **Excellent experience in administration, organization, documentation, communication and cost control**
- **Detail-orientation and focus on meeting quality standards and tight timelines**
- **Skill in interacting with clients and belief that providing quality individual service is an important asset to an organization's client relationships**
- **Proficient computer skills in Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook and Access and a 70 wpm typing speed**
- **Proven ability to work effectively in a fast-paced environment and handle new challenges**

I look forward to meeting you and discussing ABC Company's needs and my qualifications at a mutually convenient time. I will contact you the week of January 18th to follow up. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer White  
Encl.

## COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

- My cover letter is tailored to the specific company/organization and the requirements of the job.
- The letter begins with my return address and contact information.
- The letter has a current date.
- The date is followed by the name of the individual responsible for hiring and the business contact information.
- I have clearly indicated the position for which I'm applying in the first paragraph.
- My skills and experience clearly match the job requirements.
- The word 'I' is not overused.
- The letter is brief and to the point – no more than 3 or 4 paragraphs.
- I have focused on what benefits I will bring to the organization.
- I have avoided rehashing the resume, but have indicated highlights.
- The letter concludes with a 'call to action' requesting an interview and stating a follow up plan.
- I have checked for grammatical and spelling errors by using computerized tools and by having it read by someone else.
- My cover letter is printed on good quality paper and is signed.