

Occupational Outlook handbook: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

Cover Letter Template

Applying for a specific advertised job (if you don't have work experience)

The aim with any cover letter is to keep it brief (no more than a page).

Employers don't have time to read every job application they receive in full, so they scan them for key information. Make sure your cover letter shows how you meet the criteria for the job – this could be through your personal strengths, skills and abilities, work experience, or academic results.

When applying for a specific position, the basic format for a cover letter is:

- State that you're applying for a particular job - naming both the job title as it was written in the advertisement, and the company's name too
- State why you want to work for the company - what is it about the role or the company that appeals to you? Where possible, try to show that you have some knowledge of the company, and its products or services
- Highlight the skills and qualifications that you believe make you the best candidate for the job - always try to link these with the key requirements of the position (as stated in the position description or job ad)
- Ask for an interview. Don't be shy - this shows you have initiative and are enthusiastic about the job

Tip #1 – Make sure your cover letter addresses each of the key skills and requirements of the job's position description - there's no use talking about things that your future employer isn't actually looking for!

Tip #2 – Use your resume to back up and expand upon the key points in your cover letter

Tip #3 – List your key selling points in bullet form to make them easy to read

Tip #4 – A personal touch will help you stand out from other job applicants (e.g. briefly explaining why you think you would fit in with the company culture, how much you like the company's products/services, or the interest you have in the area the organisation works in)

How to highlight your skills and qualities if you don't have work experience:

If you don't have specific, paid work experience, you'll still be able to use your cover letter to highlight the skills, abilities and experience you've gained through school, training, work experience programs or voluntary positions. The letter needs to be brief (no longer than a page), so you'll need to write only one or two paragraphs that describe these key selling points. This might include:

- Your relevant experience specific to the job (e.g. "I have two years' experience with all aspects of customer service and retail sales gained as a part-time volunteer with the Salvation Army's 'Savers' program")
- Your key skills, qualities and abilities specific to the job (e.g. "I have hands-on experience with a range of computer applications and I work well with others in stressful situations.")
- Your relevant qualifications or training/academic track record specific to the job (e.g. "My studies have focused on mathematics and science, and I took additional applied maths and chemistry electives in Year 11.")

Student Name
Student Address
City, State Zip Code
Student Phone #
Student Email

Employer Contact Name
Title
Company Name
Company Address
City, State Zip Code

June 1, 2007

Dear Employer Contact Name,

I am very interested in your position available as a part of a corporate team with learning opportunities and room for growth.

List a reason why you are perfect for this job. I have a range of administrative skills and experience to match the position you describe, including (write in a bulleted list or write in paragraph form):

- Hands-on experience with a range of office programs including Microsoft Word and Excel, and the ability to learn new applications with confidence and ease.
- Impeccable attention to detail and the ability to complete tasks quickly and efficiently.
- Experience in working in an office environment gained through my high school work experience programs (e.g., reception, filing, mail management, typing, maintaining manager's schedules, booking flights and accommodation and diary management).
- The ability to learn new tasks and adapt my skills to a range of work situations (I was confidently booking flights and accommodation and organising my manager's busy diary after only five minutes' instruction).

I am pleased to offer these skills and abilities to a business that provides products that I not only use regularly, but fully endorse. I am confident that I would be able to promote your products to new and current customers through every aspect of the work and tasks that I undertake.

Enclosed is my resume for your review. I believe I am an excellent candidate for this role and look forward to meeting with you to discuss this position further.

Yours sincerely,
Student Signature
Student Name