

Preparing Your Cover Letter

The cover letter introduces your resumé.

→Your cover letter is the first document that an employer will read about you.

→Always submit a cover letter. Take the time to compose an impressive letter that will professionally introduce your resumé to the prospective employer and make them want to read on and learn more about you. Make a great first impression.

Components:

Letterhead – The letterhead shows how to contact you. This includes your name, street address, city, province, postal code, telephone number, and email address. Do not use abbreviations for any names. Use only one telephone number. Your telephone should have an answering message to accept employer calls. Use this exact, identical letterhead on your resumé and references page.

Date – Always date your cover letter. It should be one line below your letterhead.

Inside Address – Address your letter to a specific person whenever you can. Include their title with the company's complete mailing address and postal code. Research may be required to get this information.

Subject line – This line is optional but a good idea to insert if you know the exact job title.

First paragraph – This introductory paragraph explains why you are writing. The reason is to review and consider your enclosed resumé for a specific job being offered or field you are attempting to enter. Also include the date you saw the ad and where it was posted.

Second paragraph – Explain how your education, training and achievements relate to this potential job. Indicate the full name of your diploma program with details of the training received and skills gained. Mention the date you expect to graduate or the date available for work. This paragraph describes your most recent assets which are: education and training.

Third paragraph – Attempt to clarify how your training or previous work experience and job functions relate to the prospective job requirements. Use buzz words, keywords, and phrases from the job posting which will indicate you have exactly what they require. If your experience was not related to the field, you did however develop or enhance many valuable transferable soft skills such as communication, time management, organization, prioritizing, teamwork or individual work. These soft skills are invaluable and a requirement of every job.

Fourth paragraph – The closing paragraph expresses your desire to meet with them for an interview. Also, thank them for taking the time to review and consider your resumé and include your telephone number. This indicates that you anticipate a quick response.

Fifth paragraph – This optional paragraph may be added to explain that you will be following up in the near future to confirm receipt of your resumé. Indicate the specific date you will make contact, and the method you intend to use, whether it be telephone or email. This follow-up confirmation should always be made, regardless of stating it here in writing, or not. This demonstrates your eagerness and interest in getting the interview.

Closing – Express your sincerity and type your name at the bottom. You should leave five blank lines between Yours truly and your typed name. The blank lines allow you enough space to sign the letter with a pen.

Enclosure – By inserting the word Enclosure, below your typed name, indicates you have an attachment. Attach your resumé to the back of the cover letter with a paper clip. You may also attach a Letter of Recommendation from a previous employer, Transcript of Marks, or Practicum Evaluation.

The assessment process of selecting the right candidate for the job starts with your well-written cover letter.