

WRITING THE COVER LETTER

The cover letter must be unique, personal and attention-getting. The following is a general guide for constructing a cover letter.

- If you are mailing your resume and cover letter to a potential employer, include the proper heading.
- If you are emailing your materials, remove the heading and paste your greeting and the body of your letter in your email and attach your resume.

Date

Mr./Ms./Dr. First and Last Name

Title

Name of Organization

Address

City, State, Zip code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name:

Introduction Paragraph:

In your initial paragraph, state the reason for the letter, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying and indicate from what resource (website, news media, employment service, name of person who referred you, etc.) you learned of the opening. Say something to intrigue the reader that *sells* you. NEVER say you don't have any experience! You do have experience. Present it in a way that demonstrates you would be a strong candidate for the position. The letter should flow, and it should have a story. Keep in mind the type of position for which you are applying. For example, a cover letter for a financial job should be formal while a cover letter for a job in writing should be creative.

Body Paragraphs:

Briefly indicate why you are interested in the position, the company, its products or its services. Demonstrate your high level of interest and enthusiasm for the position by revealing the fact that you have researched their organization and are knowledgeable about them. Do not take up too much room with this; they are more interested in learning about your skills and experience.

Explain your qualifications as a candidate for the position. This should be the most significant part of the letter. State your related experience, work, internships, volunteer, or student leadership positions, and point out specific achievements or unique qualifications that match the job description. Try not to repeat the exact information the reader will find in the resume, rather elaborate on points of interest to them. Use the qualifications listed in the job description for the position as your guide for this section. Be specific and give examples that demonstrate how you have used those skills.

Closing Paragraph:

In the closing paragraph indicate your desire for an interview and your flexibility as to the time and place. Possibly repeat your phone number and e-mail address. If applicable, state that you will be in the city where the company is located on a certain date and would like to set up an interview. Thank the person for his/her consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name