

What is a Cover Letter?

- It Accompanies your Resume
- It Explains why you are sending your resume
- It Targets your resume to a specific position or career field

Do an individual Cover Letter for each job to which you are sending an application or a general letter when applying for the same position at different companies

Your Cover Letter should always be typed unless otherwise specified. It should contain NO grammatical, spelling or typing errors. Never cross out, white out, or leave in errors. The Cover Letter is a reflection of you; make sure you give the employer a positive impression.

Remember to include your return address, the date, the employer's address and your signature.

When should I include my Cover Letter?

A cover letter should be included anytime you mail your resume, whether you are responding to an ad, following up a lead from a friend, or contacting a company cold.

What does a Cover Letter consist of?

A Cover Letter should have six parts:

- The Salutation
- The Opening Paragraph which states the positions for which you are applying and how you heard about them.
- A section stating why the employer should hire you.
- A section stating why you want to work for the employer.
- A request for action on the employer's part
- The closing.

Cover Letter Tips to Remember

- Keep your letter Short and to the Point
- Check for Spelling, Grammatical and Typing errors
- Never mention a salary figure
- Avoid using the word "I"

Make a Specific Cover Letter whenever possible.

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Cover Letter Check List

Did you remember to:

- Include your Address and Phone Number?
- Choose the proper Salutation?
- Use a business-like format?
- Write an Opening that gets attention?
- Highlight key strengths and abilities?
- Demonstrate how you would be a valuable asset to the company?
- State your Relevant Education and Experience?
- Sign your name in ink?
- Proofread for typing, grammatical and spelling errors?

Include your resume in the envelope?

Don't forget to Follow Up

Call within a week after sending your resume to make sure the employer has received it.

If you are responding to an advertisement in the newspaper, call once a week until you get a definite answer on a decision as to whether you will be invited for an interview. If the answer is negative, inquire as to why you are not suitable for the position.

If you are writing to a company cold, call at your discretion to inquire on the status of your resume.

The Salutation

If possible, find out the name of the person to whom you will be sending your resume. Be sure you spell his/her name correctly.

If you are unable to identify the person's name and/or title, open the letter with:

Attention: Human Resources Department

Dear Sir or Madam: or Dear Mr or Ms

Avoid the use of To Whom It May Concern as this is too impersonal and outdated.

The Opening Paragraph

The first paragraph should introduce your resume and/or application. Clearly state the position you are applying for and how you heard about the position. If you are responding to an ad, state the name of the publication and the date the advertisement appeared. If you are contacting a company cold, state what position you are seeking and why you are writing to this employer.

Sample Sentences:

- Attached is my application for the position of .. as advertised in the [date] edition of the Windsor Star
- Please consider my application for the position of .. as advertised in the Windsor Star on [date]
- I would like to be considered for the position of ..
- Enclosed is my resume to provide you with the details of my skills and experience
- Enclosed is my resume as application for the position of .. with [name company]
- I am applying for the position as .. with your company
- Enclosed is a copy of my resume for your review and consideration for a position of .. with your company
- Enclosed is my resume highlighting my professional qualifications and experience

I am currently seeking a position where my skills and qualifications can be utilized.

Section 2, Why should they hire you?

This section should answer the question: "Why am I an excellent candidate for this position?" Highlight your skills and accomplishments, summarize your qualifications (related skills, abilities, education and experience) and mention your personal attributes which relate specifically to the position.

Sample Sentences:

- I have acquired over... years of experience in this line of work.
- Throughout my career, I have developed many skills, which should suit a professional environment requiring excellent organizational abilities as well as effective communication skills.
- I am confident that this experience would be an asset to your busy organization.
- I thrive in a team environment, but also excel if given the opportunity to work independently.
- I am confident that the communication, organizational and interpersonal skills I have acquired throughout my work and academic careers would be an asset to your organization.

I believe that my perseverance and dedication will allow me to be a most successful candidate for this position.

Section 3, Why do you want to work for Them?

This section should answer the question: "Why do I want to work for You?" Demonstrate that you have researched the company and express interest in working there.

Request for Action

The last paragraph should let the employer know what you expect from them. Request some form of action on their part and include an expression of appreciation.

Sample Sentences:

- Please feel free to contact my references to verify my past performance and my future potential.
- I welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to further discuss my skills and qualifications.
- I look forward to a favourable reply, and appreciate your time and consideration.

Looking forward to meeting you personally so that we may discuss my qualifications in further detail.

The Closing

Sign the letter however you prefer. You may use: Yours Truly, Yours Sincerely, Sincerely Yours, Sincerely, Respectfully.