

Cover Letter Tips

Types of Cover Letters

Letter of application: Letter written to an organization to formally apply for a desired position

Letter of inquiry: Letter written in regards to a possible position in an organization or to request further information

General Guidelines

- Use business letter format (block style or modified block style) and keep the wording professional
- Address and send each letter to specific person
- Use information acquired about the organization; do not use a form letter

Purpose of a Cover Letter

- To persuade the employer to read your resume
- Displays your eagerness and enthusiasm for the position and the company
- Improves your chance of securing an interview
- Demonstrates your written communication skills

Sections of a Cover Letter

*1. Why you
are writing*

1. Introductory Paragraph – Why you are writing

- Briefly give background information about yourself
- Capture the employer's attention in the first few sentences
- Specify your reason for writing; state the position for which you are applying
- Indicate your knowledge of and interest in the organization

*2. Why you
are a
perfect
match*

2. Body Paragraphs – Why you are a perfect match

- Explain how relevant your career plans, skills, education, or experiences are to the position
- Highlight your strengths and qualifications
- Avoid restating your resume

*3. Your
plan of
action;
assertive*

3. Concluding Paragraph – Your plan of action; assertive closing

- Indicate what actions you would like to have happen next
- If your intention is a personal interview, state your desire for the interview
- Express your appreciation for the employer's time and consideration

Things to Avoid in your Cover Letter

A weak opening

- In order to grab the employer's attention, a dynamic opening is essential

A too short or too long cover letter

- If your letter is one or two paragraphs, there may not be enough information
- If your letter exceeds one page, you may lose your reader's attention; be concise and to the point

A vaguely written cover letter

- Specify the reason you are writing and the position in which you are interested, including a position number if listed

An overly aggressive or pushy cover letter

- Be sure to thank the employer for his or her time and consideration

Next Steps

Your cover letter and resume are only your first steps in securing an interview! Be sure to contact the hiring organization within 2-3 weeks. This is to ensure they have received your material and remind them of your interest.