



HOW TO BUILD A COVER LETTER

An effective cover letter will...

- Guide the reader by summarizing the skill, knowledge, and experiences relevant to a particular opportunity.
- Display the individual's knowledge of the employer's mission, purpose, and needs.
- Demonstrate interest, excitement, and professionalism.

Tips for success

1. Addressing your letter is very important. Address your letter to a specific individual within the organization rather than "To Whom it May Concern." If do not know the name of the person that is leading the search for the vacant position, call the employer and simply ask. If you cannot receive this information about the employer, address the letter to "Dear Selection Committee" or "Dear Hiring Manager".
 2. Your cover letter should be concise. The letter is meant to compliment your resume, not repeat its content. Use your cover letter to showcase how your experiences relate to the position. The letter should emphasize ways you can fulfill the organization's needs.
 3. A strong cover letter will consist of accomplishments, specific abilities, and transferable skills. The letter should also reflect your personality and enthusiasm for the position.
 4. When it comes to length, your letter should fit on 1 page. Aim for 3-4 paragraphs.
 5. Your cover letter should follow a traditional business letter format. Avoid font styles that are difficult to read.
 6. All employers want people with exceptional communication and writing skills. Your cover letter demonstrates your writing abilities, so write thoughtfully.
 7. Before submitting your cover letter, review your document for spelling and grammatical errors.
 8. Avoid overusing the pronoun "I".
 9. Place yourself in the reader's shoes. Are you marketing your skills in a way that makes sense for the job/opportunity? Have you communicated the skills that you will contribute to the organization?
 10. Refrain from using clichés when describing your qualifications and interest for the opportunity.
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COVER LETTER GUIDE

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip

Current Date

Name
Title or Position
Department
Company
Street Address
City, State, Zip

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

Why Them? Your first sentence should express your interest and enthusiasm for the organization and/or the position for which you are applying. State your goal and the title of the position. Indicate how you were informed of the opening, and if you have a referral from someone, mention the individual by name. Personalize the letter by demonstrating that you have researched the organization. The first paragraph is the perfect place to mention something that has impressed you about the organization (e.g., an award, mission statement, or something you read on their website).

Why You? The middle paragraphs are all about you and your applicable experiences. This is your time to showcase your abilities. Always make the connection between your abilities and desired skills listed from the position/organization. Do not reiterate what is on your resume, but select several highlights from your background that are relevant to the position. Be as specific as possible in addressing the requirements listed in the job posting. Regardless of your many valuable traits, *only* focus on the ones the employer specified in the job description. Describe your most relevant qualifications and illustrate with examples. Show how your education, experiences, and enthusiasm for the opportunity make you a good fit.

Wrap it Up! Close the letter with excitement. Remind the employer of what you can do for the organization. Show the reader that you are a good fit for the organization. Reaffirm your interest in the opportunity and welcome them to contact you via phone or email. You may specify that you will call to follow-up (unless the employer has specified "no calls"). Employers appreciate initiative and motivation. Thank the recruiter for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Optional- Sign your name here)

Your typed name here