

COVER LETTERS

Information on How to Write Cover Letters for the Career World

WHAT IS A COVER LETTER?

A cover letter is a personalized, three to four paragraph business communication which generally accompanies a candidate's resume. The purpose of the cover letter is to get an INTERVIEW.

It is a sign of a serious and professional approach to job hunting. The goal of your cover letter is to convince your prospective employer you are a candidate worthy of serious consideration. It will give employers whom you approach an indication you are sincerely interested in their organization, have done some research, and you are giving them personal attention that would not be shown by the arrival of an unaccompanied resume. The stronger your cover letter is the more likely the employer will carefully read your resume.

A well written cover letter presents your ability to communicate in writing, as well as your organizational ability, both of which are pertinent to most positions.

REMEMBER!

The purpose of the cover letter is to get an interview.

T I P S

- Every resume should be accompanied by a cover letter.
- Letters should be typed, preferably in the same font as the resume. The font should be size 10 or 12.
- Letters should have 1" margins.
- The letter should, if possible, be addressed to a particular individual in the company, preferably, the head of the department in which you hope to work.
- Proofread your letter numerous times, then have someone else proofread it to ensure that you have used correct grammar and spelling.
- Use "I" sparingly.
- Be sure to sign your letters using black ink.
- Cover letters should be one page in length.

THREE MAIN AREAS

The cover letter must achieve a number of things in a minimum amount of space. The cover letter must:

- A. Introduce you to employers.
- B. Arouse their interest in you.
- C. Persuade the potential employers that you are the person for the interview.

COVER LETTER FORMAT AND CONTENT

Your street address

City, State, Zip

Date

Name of Person and Title

Company/Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. Mrs.

Introductions

State the reason for writing. Name the specific position or type of work for which you are applying. Mention the resource used in finding out about the opening/company: news media, friend, faculty, if appropriate. If you were referred to the employer by someone they know, make sure to mention this fact. In your introductory paragraph, it is also a good idea to briefly state your current employment situation.

Body (The Sales Pitch)

The body is the most crucial section because it must convince your prospective employer you are the best person for the job. Explain why you are interested in working for the employer or in the field of work. Most importantly, explain what your qualifications are (academic background, work experience, personal skills). Point out achievements that relate to the field and why you enjoy work. Highlight important points from the resume that make it clear you understand the organization's needs. Finally, refer the reader to the enclosed resume, application, and/or portfolio.

Closing

Politely indicate your desire for an interview. State you will call on a specific day to see if an interview can be arranged at the person's convenience.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your typed name