



The Cover Letter

The purpose of the Cover Letter is to give a prospective employer information on why you are interested in a position. It is an opportunity for you to summarize and demonstrate on a one-page document how you are qualified and a great fit for a position. It is an opportunity to demonstrate your writing skills and it opens a window to your personality. A good well-planned cover letter allows you the opportunity to incorporate transferable skills that you may have obtained from previous positions.

Self- Reflective Prompt

Before you begin to construct your cover letter, think about why you selected the employer and the position. Read the job description thoroughly and make sure you understand the skills and qualifications that the employer is looking for. Think back on your experiences so that you can match and describe in your cover letter how your experiences match the job qualifications.

Cover Letter Format

The format of a cover letter is as follows. The heading of your cover letter should match the heading on your resume. It should follow the format like a business letter. You will begin with the date and your full address. Next, is the employer's information, always try to address the letter to a specific person. You should then include the name and full address of the organization. Begin the letter with Dear Mr/Mrs Smith:

Opening Paragraph (Who you are and what you want)

In the opening paragraph, introduce yourself and your interest in the organization or position. Tell why you are writing, do mention the position title and how you heard of the position. For example if someone referred you to the position, if you saw the position posted on a website or on your college's career management system (Handshake) mention that as well.

Middle Paragraph (Why are you a good candidate)

The middle paragraph is the substance of your letter. Here you should highlight your qualifications (education, experience, skills) and describe how they are relevant to the position. Use some specific examples and statistics to demonstrate your skills.

Point out any achievements that relate to the field in which you are applying.

Closing Paragraph (What will you do next)

Refer to reader to the enclosed resume or other application instrument. Indicate that your resume summarizes your qualifications and background. Include any additional information you think is relevant for your future employer to know.

Helpful tips on Cover Letters

- It should grab the reader's attention in the first paragraph
- Watch grammar and spelling this is an example of your writing skills.
- Keep the tone and content professional
- Use a professional business format
- When possible always try to find a contact name to address the letter
- Write in font and point size that is easy to read- use the same font as your resume
- It should be no longer than one page
- Use the same header as your resume