

Cover Letter Tips

Why a Cover Letter is so important.

The Cover letter is a very important piece to the job application process and probably the most neglected by the job applicant. The cover letter introduces yourself to the employer and shows your interest in obtaining a position within the organization. Cover letters personalize your resume and allow job recruiters to get a better feel for who you are by showing your true interest in the desired job. It reflects your personality, your attention to detail, your communication skills, your enthusiasm, your intellect, and your specific interest in the company to which you are sending the letter.

In reality, writing the perfect cover letter tests your skills in business writing. Being able to write and communicate in the business world is a whole new ballgame and is something that is looked at in the professionalism of your cover letter.

Just about all resumes are produced in the same list style format and can be pretty plain and boring to read and go over to the typical employer with dozens of resumes. Most prospective employees seem to spend most of their time perfecting the resume, and after all that detail the applicant is usually too burnt out to spend ample time producing a high quality cover letter.

Your resume and listed qualifications may change slightly according to the job you are applying for, but it's the cover letter that is unique to each job opening. A new cover letter must be perfected for each new position you find interesting and is required for a successful job search.

Cover Letter Tips:

- Express your interest in the organization and why you are sending a resume.
- You want to sell yourself in the cover letter to convince the reader to check out your resume and better yet, get a job interview.
- Briefly share your education and qualifications for the desired positions.
- Include a follow up statement in the closing, something like, "I will contact you early next week to discuss this job opportunity."
- Check out Sample cover letters to get a good feel of how a typical cover letter should appear.
- Always ensure the letter is addressed to an individual, if possible.
- Make sure the cover letter is clear, concise, and well organized.

Cover Letter Format:

A Cover letter follows typical business letter guidelines.

The typical cover letter is about one page with three body paragraphs.

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1st Opening paragraph: State why you are writing; how you learned of the organization or position, and basic information about yourself. This is the most important paragraph as it must be written to catch the employer's immediate interest.

- 2nd paragraph: Tell why you are interested in the employer or type of work the employer does and how it relates to your background. Mention specific qualifications which make you a good fit for the employer's needs. This is an opportunity to explain in more detail relevant items in your resume.

- 3rd paragraph: Express that you would like the opportunity to interview for a position or to talk with the employer to learn more about opportunities available within their company. Include your plans to follow up. Let the employer know that you are happy to provide them with any additional information needed. Thank the employer for her/his consideration.

Other job application tips:

Include a picture of yourself. This will make you more memorable and will give a face to countless amounts of applications employers receive.