

Cover Letter

What is it?

A cover letter is a brief summary of your qualifications and how they will benefit the company you are applying to.

It is not a regurgitation of your resume. A cover letter is a broader explanation of your skills. A great cover letter entices the hiring manager into reading your resume. A good resume is also concise (one page or less) and has plenty of white space.

Any time you submit a resume, you should also submit a cover letter.

Heading

Make sure the heading of your resume matches the heading of your cover letter. If this information is centered at the top of your resume, center it at the top of your cover letter.

Below that, with a space in between, write the name and address of the hiring manager and company, as well as the date.

To find out who the hiring manager is, do some research or call the organization. A cover letter can be sent without being addressed to anyone, but it makes it more personable if you have a name, and shows that you took the effort to research the organization.

First Paragraph

The first paragraph only needs three pieces of information: the reason for sending a cover letter, the position you are applying for, and how you learned of the opening.

Middle Paragraph(s)

Discuss why are you interested in the position and the organization. Above all, indicate what you can do for the employer. Emphasize your main qualifications for the job for which you are applying.

For recent graduates, explain how your academic background makes you qualified for the job. If you have practical work experience, point out specific achievements and responsibilities that relate to the position.

Present applicable items in your background that prove your potential value to the company, but do not go into great detail. Refer the reader to your resume for further explanation of qualifications.

Closing Paragraph

Indicate your desire for an interview. Take the initiative in requesting an appointment to further discuss your qualifications and employment opportunities. You may want to state that you will call at a specific date and time to discuss interview possibilities. Show your appreciation to the reader for his/her time and consideration.