

Cover Letter Guide

Listed below are the components to build an effective cover letter. If you have questions about creating a cover letter or would like your cover letter to be reviewed, please contact

Basics

- **A cover letter should directly recognize the needs of the company and position for which you are applying and the ways in which your unique traits/skills/talents would meet those needs.**
 - **Research:** Make sure you know some information about the company you hope to work for. Try to integrate that knowledge into your cover letter. Utilize the company websites to gain valuable information about the particular company you are interested in and check websites such as vault.com and webfeet.com for employer/employee information.
 - **Know your Interests and Skills:**
 - What skills do you have that could be valuable in the work setting
 - What other (work or personal) experiences demonstrate a background that would enrich the company or business environment
 - What are the strengths that most define you as you enter your new career?
 - **Keep your writing style simple and direct**
 - **Present yourself in a positive and honest manner**
 - **Proofread!**
 - **Use the same paper and same font as used on your resume**
 - **One page in length**
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First Paragraph

- State the reason you are writing the letter – position you are applying for or inquiring about
 - Grab the attention of your audience
 - Source of referral, if any
 - Include your interest in the position
 - **Flatter your audience by including company information found through research**
 - End the paragraph with a persuasive statement about why you are qualified for the position or why you are the ideal candidate
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Second Paragraph

- Demonstrate why you are qualified for the job
 - Emphasize what you can contribute to the organization
 - Give concrete examples of your skills and experience – prove it!
 - **Highlight information found on the resume**, but do not simply repeat your entire resume
 - Easy method – choose your top 3 skills that relate to the position and give a specific example for each
 - May be 1-2 paragraphs
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Final Paragraph

- Reiterate your interest in the position
 - State your appreciation of the employer's consideration
 - Include your intentions for follow-up
 - Phone number/e-mail and best way to contact you
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Formatting

Please see the example for information on formatting your cover letter.