

# COVER LETTERS 101

All cover letters should...

★ Be concise and professional in tone.

Cover letters should be only one page long and will serve as an example of your writing abilities. Use a professional and confident tone, and make sure you PROOFREAD!

★ Explain why you are sending a resume.

Don't make the reader guess what you are interested in—be specific: Do you want a part-time contract job or a permanent full-time position? Are you inquiring about future employment possibilities?

★ Tell how you learned about the position or organization.

Be specific. Did you learn of the opportunity from a flyer, a website, a networking event, family friend, etc.? It is appropriate to mention the name of someone who suggested that you contact the company.

★ Convince the reader to look at your resume.

The cover letter will be seen first—this is your movie trailer. It must grab the reader's attention (in a positive way) and should be targeted to that particular employer.

★ Highlight your education and experience.

Using examples, identify specific skills and past experiences that are relevant to the position you are seeking.

★ Reflect your attitude.

Try to convey your personality, motivation, enthusiasm, teamwork, and communication skills.

★ Indicate what you will do to follow-up.

Will you be contacting them? If so, when and how?

# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Your Street Address  
City, State Zip Code  
Telephone Number  
E-mail Address

If you are mailing a hard copy,  
your contact information will go at  
the top of the page.

Month Day, Year

Mr./Ms./Dr. FirstName LastName  
Title  
Name of Organization  
Street Address  
City, State Zip Code

If you don't know the person's  
name, simply address it to  
"Hiring Manager:"

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. LastName,

**Introductory Paragraph:** State why you are writing, how you learned of the company or position, and include the job posting ID #, if there is one. Also, be sure to include the name of a mutual contact, if you have one.

**2nd Paragraph:** Tell why you are interested in the employer or that particular field/industry type. Demonstrate your knowledge of the organization to relate your educational and professional background to the employer or position. Mention specific qualifications that make you a good fit for the employer's needs. Focus on what you can contribute to the company, not what the employer can do for you. In this paragraph, it is also appropriate to elaborate on some of the relevant items in your resume.

**Last Paragraph:** Indicate that you would like the opportunity to interview for the position or to talk with the employer to learn more about the company and any future hiring plans. State how you will follow up (e.g. will call in two weeks). Include that you would be glad to provide the employer with any additional information needed. Thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Your handwritten signature*

Your name typed

If you are e-mailing the letter, your  
contact information will go  
beneath your signature.

Enclosure(s) (If you included a resume, transcript, letter of recommendation, etc.)