

Cover Letter Development Guide

- ✓ Use standard business-letter format (i.e., block format) with single space paragraphs and double space between paragraphs. Customize each cover letter to the position.
- ✓ Address the individual by name (Mr./Mrs./Ms.). Do not address the person by his or her first name. If you do not know their gender, use their full name (e.g., Dear Pat Smith). If you do not have the name of an employer, address it as “Dear Hiring Manager” or “Dear Search Committee.”
- ✓ *Lead Paragraph:* This should identify the position you are applying for, state where you learned about the opening, and communicate your enthusiasm for the opening. Share any company research you have gathered or your long-term career goals. Attract attention and entice them to read your resume thoroughly.
- ✓ *The Body:* This should sell your background and highlight your qualifications. To avoid repeating your resume, focus on the characteristics you possess in relation to the job description. Craft a different letter for each employer to match your skills to their qualifications. Provide examples and evidence. Be persuasive and refer to your enclosed resume for additional details. Emphasize what you can do for the employer, rather than what you hope to gain from the experience.
- ✓ *Concluding Paragraph:* Identify your follow-up steps and close with a request for an interview. Thank the employer for their time and consideration.
- ✓ Proof your letter thoroughly to make sure that it is free of grammatical errors. Have it critiqued by a member of the Academic and Career Planning Center staff.
- ✓ Write clearly and simply. Avoid jargon and wordy, complex sentences. Also avoid reiterating verbatim the content of your resume, identifying your weaknesses, beginning too many sentences with “I,” or exceeding one page.
- ✓ Print it on paper that matches your resume. White or off white is best.
- ✓ Remember to sign your letter.

Street Address
City, State Zip

Date

Employer's Name
Title
Agency
Street Address

Dear Mr. or Ms. or Search Committee or Personnel Director or..... :

Paragraph One:
I am writing to apply for . . .

Paragraph Two:
If you were to hire me, you would obtain an employee with over four years of experience in marketing and sales.

Paragraph Three (if you need to highlight other qualifications)
In addition to my strong professional background, I also possess significant expertise in This May I will earn my . . .

Paragraph Three/Four:
While the enclosed resume further highlights my qualifications, you can better capture my motivation and energy during a face-to-face appointment. I may be reached at #### and am available at your convenience. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
(4 returns & signature)
Name

Enclosure (If there are any)



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