

## Cover Letter Technology

More and more employers are using technology in their job search and selection process. Increasingly, job seekers are being asked to send their resumes and cover letters online. When using email or other online resources to contact potential employers, it is important that you keep the following tips in mind:

- Keep your letter brief and succinct
- Mention how you heard of the position and/or found the recipients' email address
- Compose your letter "off-line" first for proofreading
- Embed your cover letter and resume in the email message rather than send as a file attachment.
- Follow up with a hard copy sent through U.S. mail

Communication skills are among the most important skills you bring to your career. Your job search materials are the first impression an employer will have of your competency. There are seven basic letters you may use during your job search.

- Application
- Acceptance
- Prospecting
- Withdrawal
- Networking
- Rejection
- Thank-you

For additional information on the technical aspects of attaching and/or sending your cover letter electronically, or on specific job search, visit the Career Center or review the Career Resource library.

## Checklist for Writing Good Cover Letters

Aspects of a good cover letter include:

- Focusing on the needs of the employer and not your own needs/expectations
- Write the letter yourself. Take responsibility for following up with your correspondence. Never delegate this responsibility to someone else.
- Individually typing and addressing your letter using business letter format and a letter-quality printer
- Aesthetically appealing letters with careful attention to spacing and format
- No errors or obvious corrections
- Limiting the letter to one page, using paper identical to the paper used for your resume (letter-quality printer paper or high quality bond paper)
- Addressing the letter to a specific individual with name, title, organization and address spelled correctly. Use "Human Resource Manager" or "Hiring Official" as a last resort. It is acceptable for you to call and ask to whom you should address your letter and resume.
- Well worded, concise and a controlled use of the pronoun "I".
- Highlights of your skills and abilities that goes beyond a restatement of what is already on your resume
- Demonstration of your knowledge of the organization/company
- Demonstration that you know your objective

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# COVER LETTERS

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Career Services  
Division of Student Affairs  
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## Writing your Cover Letter

The art of writing a good cover letter is more important than ever in today's job market. Your cover letter provides the opportunity to:

- Introduce yourself and state your objective
- Personalize your resume
- Highlight information that addresses the needs and interests of the employer

### FAQ's About Cover Letters

**Do I need to send a cover letter with every resume I submit?**

**Answer:** If ever in doubt, send a cover letter with all resumes. There are circumstances when cover letters are not necessary (on-campus interviews, job fairs, etc.). It is a good idea to include one, especially if you are initiating contact.

**Does the cover letter repeat information listed on my resume?**

**Answer:** The cover letter is usually read before your resume and highlights specific information on your resume. More importantly, the cover letter allows you to state why you are interested and explain in more depth your responsibilities, roles, skills and how they match the employer's needs. The letter must be interesting to read and unique to your experiences and skills.

**Will I come across boastful if I write about my strengths? I feel uncomfortable "bragging."**

**Answer:** If you carefully plan your letter and communicate effectively, you can avoid sounding boastful. Do not simply state your strengths; give concrete examples of how you have developed skills and used your talents. If you do not articulate your confidence, how will the employer know you are the "right" person for the job? Let the employer know what you can do for them.

## Cover Letter Outline

As you prepare your cover letter realize that while a general cover letter can be used, best results come from individualizing each letter to fit the specific needs of the targeted employer.

(eight spaces down from top)

Your Present Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Date  
(quadruple space)

Ms./Mr. Employer Name  
Title  
Company  
Mailing Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Ms./Mr. \_\_\_\_\_:

**Opening Paragraph** – Tell why you are writing. Name the position, field or general vocational area about which you are inquiring or applying. Tell how you heard of the opening, the company or organization. Mention a contact name, if you have one.

**Middle Paragraph** - Mention the qualifications you believe are of greatest interest to the employer. Tell why you are interested in the company/organization, or specific type of work. If you have related experience or specialized training, point it out. Do not repeat what is on your resume, but customize your skills and experiences to the employer's needs. This is the place to "sell" your skills and abilities to a potential employer. Document your claims with statements to show evidence of your skills. End the paragraph with a statement indicating your confidence in your ability to perform in the position.

**Closing Paragraph** – Refer the reader to your enclosed resume or application. **If this is a letter of inquiry**, request an application or other informational materials and an interview. **If this is a letter of application**, state that you will follow up with a phone call on a specific date to arrange for an interview or check on the status of your application. Thank the employer for their consideration of your application/resume. Include your phone number in this final paragraph.

Sincerely,  
(quadruple space)

(Your handwritten signature)  
Type your Name

Enclosure(s)