

Cover Letters: The Basics

Written by Administrator
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So you've successfully navigated the resume writing process. Congratulations. Now it is time to move on to what many employers consider to be an essential part of an application. The cover letter. Cover letters, if broken up into "chunks", can be quite manageable. Refer to these useful tips to keep your writing on track.

1. The Setup:

At the top of the page center text and print your name in **bold**. Below your name include your address, phone number and email address. Leave a space and on the left-side margins fill out the employers name, title and address. Leave a space and put the date. Leave another space and address the letter to the employer (Dear Mr/Ms. so and so). You can now begin the actual letter.

2. Content:

Like any piece of writing, a cover letter is broken up into an introduction, body, and conclusion. For a cover letter each of these sections has an important function. You should start by introducing yourself and give the reason why you are writing the letter. Also mention how you found out about the position. The focus of the body should be on work/volunteer experience as well as the skills you possess that recommend you for the position.

3. Length:

Don't go over a page or you'll risk boring the reader. However, make sure your letter has substance as you don't want the employer wondering why they read your letter at all! A cover letter is an introduction to yourself and your resume. It is not your resume written in full sentences. A solid page broken into 3-5 paragraphs should suffice.

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4. Use Action Verbs:

Important is that you do not simply state the experience. Instead, link it to the job requirements and skills that the potential employer will consider to be an asset. Do this by using action verbs. Action verbs help the writer associate what they have done in the past with their future potential and should be used abundantly in your cover letter and resume. Examples of these verbs are achieved, assembled, coordinated, provided, and supported.

5. Tone:

Remember that your cover letter is going to set a standard that you're going to have to live up to during an interview. You don't want to be generic but you should maintain a professional done throughout the letter. Avoid negative comments and save any issues that you feel should be brought up for the interview.