

Getting Noticed

How to write a cover letter that gets you an interview.

Your cover letter is a representation of you. Take the same care and attention in writing your cover letter as you would in preparing for an interview.

This is your opportunity to get noticed by an employer - make it count!



Addressing

- Always address the letter to a specific person. Call the employer to get the correct name and spelling, the title, and address, email, or fax number. Write each cover letter specifically for the company and/or position you are seeking.

Introduction

- Make a strong opening statement to get the reader's attention. Stand out from the crowd and get the reader interested in you right from the start.
- If you were referred to the addressee, indicate by whom, using the name of a contact or mutual acquaintance.



Second Paragraph

- Provide more detail about your professional and/or academic qualifications.
- Provide more information about how you can provide the benefits you mention in the first paragraph. Be sure to stress accomplishments and achievements rather than job duties and responsibilities. Use action verbs to describe your accomplishments and achievements.
- Expand on specific items from your resume that are relevant to the job you are seeking.
- If you do not have a lot of solid experience in the field you are trying to enter, remember to focus on key skills that can easily transfer from your previous work experience to the job at hand.
- If responding to a job posting or ad, be sure to tailor this paragraph to the needs described in the advertisement.



Third Paragraph

- Relate yourself to the company, giving details why you should be considered for the position. Make the reader aware that you have done your homework and know something about the organization and how it fits with your skills, strengths, objectives, and interests.



Closing paragraph

- Request the next step in the employment process: an interview.
- If possible, indicate that you will contact the addressee at a specific date or time to arrange a mutually convenient appointment time.
- You may request a written response especially if the organization is not local.
- Be positive in your attitude. Express your confidence that you are a perfect fit for the job. Expect an appointment or a response.



Format

- Keep it brief and concise. Never more than 1 page.
- Always carefully re-read your letter after you have written it. Look out for and delete any repetition or irrelevant information.
- Always check for spelling, typographical, and grammatical mistakes.
- Use business letter format, with paragraphs beginning at the left margin.
- If delivering hardcopy, use good quality paper.

