

Writing Cover Letters

Sending a cover letter with your résumé is a great way to introduce yourself, market your attributes and communicate your reason for contacting a company. It could be the first thing an employer sees, so it has to shine. Connect with the hiring manager by identifying your best skills and notable experience. Indicate how your qualities relate to the position's qualifications.

Cover letters can be sent via email, mail or fax. The format is somewhat different for the email version, as you will see in the templates below. Try to address your letter to someone specific. This shows you did your research or took time to call. Make sure your letter/email is professional, short and friendly. Always use spell check and review grammar and capitalization. Paper-based cover letters should be on the same type of paper as your résumé and should be signed in black ink.

Email cover letters—although quick and easy to send—demand the same level of attention and detail. When you are emailing a résumé for a job, the body of the email message becomes your cover letter. Regardless of the format, follow the employer's directions for submitting your cover letter and résumé. Consider sending the email to yourself, first, to test the formatting you used.

Use these templates as a guide to create your cover letters.

Your street address
City, State, Zip Code

Date

Recipient's full name with salutation (Ms., Mr., Dr., etc.)
His or her job title
Company name
Work street address
City, State, Zip Code

Greeting (Dear Ms. Smith:)
State the position for which you are applying, how you found out about it, and ask for consideration. Usually consists of 2-3 sentences.

Write 3-5 sentences describing how you are the best candidate for the job. Use some well-chosen adjectives to describe your best attributes, skills, education and experience that relate to the position for which you are applying. Provide information specifically requested in the job listing that might not be fully covered in your résumé. You should not just summarize the contents of your résumé.

Restate your interest and enthusiasm for the position. Remind the reader of your phone number and email address, and state that you look forward to meeting him or her. We suggest that you tell them that you will initiate the follow-up. Just be sure that you make contact when you say you will. Thank the reader for his or her time.

Sincerely,
LEAVE SPACE TO SIGN YOUR NAME HERE
(between your closing and your name)
Your full name typed out
Enclosure: Résumé (list other documentation required and attached)

Cover letter template

Cover letter email template

Subject Line of Email Message: Title of job, Number (if listed), your last name
Email Message:
Greeting (Dear Ms. Smith:)

Use the same 3-paragraph-format for your email as you would for a paper-based cover letter. See template on left for what to include in each paragraph.

Sincerely,
Your full name typed out
Address
Email
Home Phone
Cell Phone