

Cover letters

Your cover letter supports your resume and tells the employer why they should consider you for an interview. It should be short, concise and related to the job you're applying for. The cover letter format also allows you to show your writing ability and attention to detail. Always spell check and have a friend review as well.

Here are some guidelines for writing a cover letter that will connect with the employer.

□ Top of the letter

Header – Use the same header you used in your resume, including your name, current address, telephone number and email address.

Date – Put the date at the top of the letter.

Employer's information – Include the employer's name, job title and mailing address.

□ Greeting

Address the person as "Mr." or "Ms." followed by their last name (for example, "Dear Ms. Michaels"). If you're not sure of their gender, use their full name (for example, "Dear Alex Cairns").

If you don't have a specific person you can contact, you can use a general salutation such as:

- Dear Hiring Manager
- Dear Sir or Madam
- To Whom it May Concern
- Dear [Company Name] Recruiter
- Dear Human Resources Manager

□ Paragraphs and closing

Opening Paragraph – Tell the employer that you're applying for a particular position or type of work. You can do this in your initial sentence or include a subject line below your greeting, for example "Re: Hudson's Bay Sales Associate Position". You can include how you heard of the opening. If someone referred you, say so and name the person.

Middle paragraphs – Here's your chance to tell the employer exactly why you're interested in the job and their organization. Highlight the experience, skills and qualities that make you a good fit for this particular job. You can include relevant volunteer or school experience. Avoid just repeating facts from your resume, and instead use an example of something you did and what the outcome was.

Your letter is more likely to stand out if you can show that you have some knowledge of the organization and their needs. Link the skills and experience you bring to the needs of the job. Employers also appreciate candidates who show a genuine interest in the organization.

Conclusion – Mention your attached or enclosed resume or application. Offer to provide more information, if needed. Let the employer know the best way to contact you and that you would like to meet with them. Thank them for their time and attention.

Closing – At the end of your letter, use a closing like "Sincerely" or "Yours Truly," followed by your signature and name. For online applications, you may just type your name instead of signing the letter.



Sample cover letter template

Your name
Your address
Your telephone #
Your email

Date

Employer's Name
Company Name and Department Name
Company Address

Dear Employer's Name,

In the first paragraph introduce yourself and state your reason for writing.

Use the next paragraphs to highlight your skills and qualifications. Use words and phrases from the job advertisement or job description, ensuring you include skills, duties, responsibilities and relevant personal qualities.

Include real examples of accomplishments to tell the employer why your experience makes you a good fit for the position and how the company would benefit from hiring you. Include any relevant qualifications you have such as certificates, diplomas and training courses.

Use the closing paragraph to finish up the cover letter. Mention the following:

- your appreciation for their time and attention
- your interest in meeting the employer
- the best way to contact you

Close the letter with your name and signature.