

## COVER LETTER DO'S AND DON'TS

A cover letter is part of your first impression. Often, a hiring authority will read your cover letter prior to your CV or Resume. If they are not impressed by the contents of the cover letter, you could be screened out before they read the first word on your CV or Resume.

Many cover letters are read and thrown away, so you don't want to include vital information that is not also included on your CV or Resume. The purpose of your cover letter is to entice this person to read your CV or Resume. You do not want to include any information that would screen you out. Your CV or Resume is to entice this person enough that they schedule an interview.

### **SAMPLE COVER LETTER 1 - Answering an Ad**

Date

Person's Name

Company Name

Address

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_: (Make sure spelling of their name is accurate)

#### **First paragraph:**

This is in response to the ad you recently ran in (location of the ad), on (date of the ad) for (title of the position). I am confident that my abilities match the requirements of this position and I'm very interested in working for your company. (If you know any facts about their company, you can include a sentence about why you are interested in their company.)

#### **Second paragraph:**

Review the requirements of the ad and restate them as your strengths. Include two columns in the body of the cover letter. List the requirements of the job in the left hand column and your related skills and experience in the right hand column. You then list two or three accomplishments that set you apart from other individuals who have also done this job. List what you did and the positive impact on your company.

#### **What I Know To Be True:**

Your cover letter should address the WIIFM (What's In It for Me) of the person reading it.

#### **Third paragraph:**

Thank you for your consideration. I will follow up in a few days, to hopefully schedule a face-to-face interview. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Contact Information

Attachment: CV or Resume

## **SAMPLE COVER LETTER 2 – Cold Mailing (Never spoke to this person)**

Date

Person's Name

Company Name

Address

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_: (Make sure spelling of their name is accurate)

### **First paragraph:**

This letter is being directed to you in hopes that your organization may currently be in need of an overachiever with a proven track record and strong work ethic, who is currently a free agent in the job market. What I bring to the table is a stable, successful track record that includes: (List your three best accomplishments and the impact they had).

### **Second paragraph:**

I've conducted extensive research on your company, and was very impressed by (list some of the positive things you have learned). That is the reason I have identified your company as one of my primary job targets. I would be most interested in a position (describe the type of position or department).

### **Third paragraph:**

Thank you for your consideration. I will follow up in a few days, to hopefully schedule a convenient time for us to meet. I look forward to our conversation.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Contact Information

Attachment: CV or Resume

## **SAMPLE COVER LETTER 3 – You Know They Have A Position Open**

Date

Person's Name

Company Name

Address

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_: (Make sure spelling of their name is accurate)

### **First paragraph:**

Enclosed you will find my CV or Resume outlining my experience, skills and work ethic. I was recently informed that your company has an opening for (list the position), which is exactly the type of opportunity I would be interested in pursuing.

### **Second paragraph:**

Tie this paragraph into the skill sets they require. Also, list your accomplishments and the positive impact on your past employers. You want to inform this person of what you bring to the table.

### **Third paragraph:**

I'm confident in my abilities to do this job and very interested in working for your company. I will be contacting you within the next few days to hopefully schedule an interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Contact Information

Attachment: CV or Resume

Cover letters should be typed, proofread and be an example of your written and communication skills. I suggest you handwrite the envelope and write "Personal and Confidential" on the left hand lower corner of the envelope, so the person you are sending this to will actually open the envelope.

Administrative Assistants will open all mail for their employers with the exception of handwritten envelopes marked "Personal and Confidential." If a secretary opens an envelope and sees a CV or Resume, she will either send it to the Human Resource Department or sometimes even discard it.

You want your cover letter to enhance your chances of an interview, so spend time learning how to write effective ones. Take time today to write a cover letter by following the advice in this program.