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# Top 5 Strategic Cover Letter Formats to Get You an Interview Today

Crafting a concise yet compelling cover letter increases your chances of getting scheduled for an interview. It should highlight your most relevant skills and give a glimpse into your personality, so recruiters know you're a good fit. Read on to learn all you need to know about cover letter formats that bring you one step closer to a job offer.



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Cover Letter Optimizer

Trusted by:



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# What is a cover letter and why does it matter?

A [cover letter](#) is a short document that is typically sent together with a [resume](#), curriculum vitae, portfolio, or other important attachments in a job application. Its main purpose is to highlight details that are relevant to a job and that can improve a candidate's chances of getting selected.

If you're writing a cover letter, think of it as your one chance to show recruiters that you are what they're looking for.

Don't waste it by writing a meh letter!

It shouldn't be just a random attachment to your resume. It has to make recruiters want to get to know you better.

Put your best foot forward using clear, descriptive language, and don't be afraid to show off your [major accomplishments](#) and [skills](#). If you have a letter ready, check out [Jobscan's cover letter checker](#) to see if it's doing all of that for you.

## Benefits of proper cover letter formatting

Following the proper cover letter format ensures that:

- **Your letter is easy to read through.** Recruiters are busy people. They go through hundreds of applications. The right format makes it easy for them to read through your letter from start to finish—a good thing for recruiters and a plus for you.
- **You get to expound on important parts of your resume.** The right cover letter format provides space where you can briefly explain why you're a perfect match without over-explaining your value.
- **Your letter is tailor-fit to the job you're applying for.** It provides space for you to tailor your application to the job you're applying for, as compared to sending a generic cover letter (or, worse, no cove [Skip to content](#)



you're looking for opportunities for the first time, seeking to upgrade your skill sets, or hoping to expand your experience.

In a [survey](#) conducted on the impact of cover letters on job applications, 83 percent of respondents said that applicants who send a compelling cover letter can land an interview, even if their resume isn't particularly impressive.

You wouldn't want to pass up on that!

Still, you shouldn't let your efforts go to waste by submitting a mediocre resume. You can use this [free resume scanner](#) to optimize your resume. Pairing a solid cover letter with a strong resume can further increase your chances of getting a call for an interview!



# 18 Free Cover Letter Templates That Will Actually Get You Interviews

By using one of our simple, easy-to-read templates, you'll significantly improve the chances that your cover letter will successfully pass through an ATS and into the hands of a hiring manager.

**Try our cover letter templates today!**

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Regardless of which type you need to write, the general cover letter [template](#) remains the same. Follow this outline to write a winning cover letter:

## Date

This goes on the top left corner of your page. It doesn't have to follow any specific date format, so you can choose one you're comfortable using.

## Contact information

On a hard copy, you will need to include a more detailed version of your contact information. This goes below the date and should look like this:

Your Name  
Home address  
City, State, zip code  
Contact number  
Email address

Below this information is where the hiring manager's information goes, which should look like this:

Manager's Name  
Designation  
Company Name  
Office address  
City, State, zip code

If you're sending only a digital copy, your contact information should look like this:

Your Name  
City, State

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## Salutation

Below the date and contact information is where your greeting should go. Remember: An eye-catching cover letter begins with a salutation that mentions the hiring manager's name.

One major major mistake that applicants make is using impersonal ways to address the hiring manager, such as "Dear Sir/Madam" or the long-outdated "To whom it may concern". These fail horribly at catching hiring managers' attention and even show a lack of interest.

Another big mistake is indicating a name without verifying it's the correct one. Few things are worse than a letter with the wrong addressee name.

[Addressing a hiring manager by name](#), on the other hand, effectively grabs their attention. It has the same effect as when you hear someone calling your name on a crowded street. It will make you turn to see who's calling you.

So doing a bit of research on whose desk your letter will end up on will give you a significant edge. You'll want hiring managers to know you're addressing them personally, and that you are genuinely enthusiastic about their company.

Examples of proper ways to start a cover are:

- Dear Mr. Smith,
- Greetings John,
- Dear John,

If you can't find the hiring manager's name, you may also use these examples:

- To the Editorial Team
- Dear Jobscan Team

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## Opening

This section is where you give a brief description of yourself. Highlight relevant skills, accomplishments, and experiences that show you are a high-value candidate.

Keep this section no longer than one paragraph with only two to three short sentences in all. If you have plenty of relevant accomplishments, pick only the best and most recent. You can elaborate on your other experiences during the interview.

## Body

The body of the letter should only be one to two paragraphs long. This is the part where you expound on the following details:

- Why you're applying for the job
- What value you can add to the company or specific team
- Quantifiable accomplishments that are relevant to the role

Anyone can say they're a convincing salesperson. But those with the results to prove it are perceived as more reliable.

If you're unsure how to beef up your cover letter's body, you can use the [cover letter optimizer](#) to help you determine the best details to include.

## Closing

End your cover letter with a closing section where you can sign off using professional closings, such as:

- Sincerely,
- Best,

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Avoid using overly casual or inappropriate sign-offs, such as:

- Yours,
- Yours Truly,
- Cheers,
- Warm Regards,

Also, keep the tone professional yet friendly.

The closing section is also where you may reiterate your interest in the company or a specific position.

## Pro Tip

Only touch on past experiences that you can back up with numbers. Compared to vague claims about your track record or accomplishments, measurable results are more persuasive and give a clear picture of your strengths.

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# Cover letter format sample

Take a look at this example to help you write your own cover letter:

Jill Jobscan  
Jobhunt Rd.  
City, WA 1234  
(123) 456-7890  
[jill@jobscan.co](mailto:jill@jobscan.co)

Dear Mr. Smith,

My five years of experience as a Human Resource professional has increased my passion for people and building work environments where everyone thrives. I have a combination of expertise and dedication toward shaping a healthy work culture, which I would love to bring to your team if I am granted the opportunity.

During my engagement with Summit Agency, I successfully reduced turnover rates across all departments by 56 percent. I also implemented mental health programs and a hybrid work setup for selected teams, which boosted employee morale by 40 percent and confidence in leadership by 28 percent.

I admire your company's drive for equal opportunities, work-life balance, and a healthy work environment. And I look forward to potentially joining your team and helping you make it happen.

Sincerely,

Jill Jobscan

**NOTE:** Check out our [cover letter examples](#) page. These examples cover a wide range of jobs, industries, and situations, providing the guidance you need to create a winning cover letter.

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# Types of cover letter formats

There are five main [types of cover letters](#):

- Application
- Prospecting
- Networking
- Career change
- Email

The first four are your traditional formal letters, usually in block format and having only three to four short paragraphs. Traditional cover letters also typically have a business-like tone, but networking cover letters tend to be conversational and casual.

Aside from these four, there is another type of “cover letter” that is recently gaining popularity—the email “cover letter”.

To know which of these best suits where you are in your job search, let’s find out more about these cover letter formats:

## Application cover letter

The most common cover letter format is the application letter. This is what you would send to a recruiter to supplement a resume or curriculum vitae. It should contain all details that are relevant to the job ad and answer the question, “Why should we hire you?”

Here are ways you can make sure your letter matches the job post:

- Touch briefly on the company, such as [Skip to content](#)



measurable results to increase your match rate.

## Pro Tip

Pick only your best accomplishments and experiences, and make sure that the cover letter is tailored for the job. Recruiters who have gone through hundreds of applications can spot a generic cover letter from a mile away!

## Prospecting cover letter

A prospecting cover letter is somewhat similar to an application cover letter. It's something you use when you're searching for a job—only this time you're not eyeing a specific post.

This is the type of [cover letter template](#) that you would send when you're interested in working for a company and are eager to learn about open positions.

Otherwise, it will give the impression that you're not sure how you can add value to the organization.

This is an example of how NOT to write a prospecting letter:

"I have five years of experience as an HR professional, with displayed strengths in compensation and benefits and recruitment. I look forward to seeing if I am a good fit for any current openings in your company."

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them.

The phrase “any current openings” without mention of preferences in job roles also makes it a weak letter. It shows a lack of confidence and passion, which results in a letter that doesn’t stand out.

Here is an example of how to properly communicate your competencies in a prospecting letter:

“I am passionate about people and building a healthy work culture where everyone thrives. As an Employee Wellness Manager, I reduced turnover rates across all departments by 56 percent. I also implemented mental health programs and a hybrid work setup for selected teams, which boosted employee morale by 40 percent.

I admire your company’s drive for equal opportunities, work-life balance, and a healthy work environment. And I look forward to seeing if I am a good fit for any HR-related roles.”

In this example, the applicant gives recruiters a clear idea regarding her skill sets, expertise, and values. This makes it easy for hiring managers to determine whether she matches current openings in line with her preference and area of expertise.

## Pro Tip

Just because you’re not applying for a specific position doesn’t mean you don’t need to have one in mind. Make your prospecting letter more compelling by indicating which roles or tasks you would excel at.

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## Networking cover letter

What better way to search for a job or get a recommendation than through friends? You can take advantage of your professional network by sending former colleagues, acquaintances, or relevant people in your circle a letter that lets them know you're open to new work opportunities.

If you have a wide network, that's great! However, you should avoid shooting just anyone in your contacts list an email.

Here are some tips on how to make sure your letter produces the right results:

- **Choose contacts in leadership positions or with a say in hiring.** Reach out to strategic people with authority to hire, can affect hiring decisions, or are qualified to make a recommendation.
- **Reach out to people who can lead you to opportunities.** If you don't have contacts who are hiring or have authority to hire, those who can lead you to people who are can make your job search easier.
- **Contact former colleagues who can vouch for your work ethic or accomplishments.** It's easier for people to recommend or hire you when they know the value that you can add to their team. Having first-hand experience with your work ethic also helps people say with confidence that you're a good choice.
- **Initiate further conversation.** Be proactive by ending your letter with an invitation to discuss opportunities. Show your eagerness by suggesting a time and place or asking for their availability. Don't end your letter without a call to action or an opportunity to follow up.
- **Give them a call beforehand.** If you have a close enough relationship, calling them before sending the letter can give your job search a real boost. This way

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## Career change letter

A [career change cover letter](#) is similar to an application letter, only that it signifies your intent to apply for a job in a different field or line of work.

Here are some tips on how to make this cover letter format work:

- **Briefly explain your reason for the career shift.** It's natural for people to wonder why you're suddenly making a career change. Give a brief but compelling answer to this in your letter. That way, recruiters understand why without thinking it's probably only because your previous job didn't work out.
- **Highlight skills and experiences relevant to the role you're applying for.** You would also want to put in a few words explaining why these skills make you a good fit for the role, especially if this is a shift to a completely unrelated profession.
- **Keep it short.** All cover letters should be short and sweet. Always assume that whoever will get your letter is in a hurry. With a career change cover format, this can be a challenge because of the added information you need to include. But you can still make it concise by only picking important highlights and using descriptive words.

## Email "Cover Letter"

This fifth cover letter format is a casual email that people typically send out when recruiters ask for a resume but don't require a formal cover letter. It's usually very brief and meant to inform recruiters that important documents have been sent. [Skip to content](#)



## Pro Tip

Even if recruiters don't ask for a cover letter, it's a good idea to send one anyway. Did you know that less than 40 percent of candidates send a cover letter even when recruiters ask for one? Sending a well-crafted cover letter will give you a huge advantage over other applicants.

## FAQs

### How to format a cover letter correctly?

To correctly format a cover letter, simply follow this general outline:

- Date
- Contact information
- Salutation
- Opening
- Body
- Closing

Here are other things to remember when formatting a cover letter:

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Monotype Corsiva, or an unprofessional-looking one like Calibri. Better options are Times New Roman and Arial.

- **Be consistent with formatting.** Use the same format, font, and document size for both your resume and cover letter.
- **Use the block format.** When writing formal letters, always use the block format. This means aligning all sections of the letter to the left and using single spacing.

## What is a cover letter?

A cover letter is a short document that is attached to a resume, curriculum vitae, or portfolio. It is intended to expound on key skills and experiences on an applicant's resume and help recruiters choose candidates that best suit a job post.

## How to write a cover letter in block format?

To write a cover letter in block format, align all the sections of your cover letter to the left, set the spacing to single in between sentences, and double in between paragraphs.

The block format is most commonly used in formal or business emails and letters.

## How to format a cover letter for an internship?

To format a cover letter for an internship, you would still want to follow the general cover letter format. You can still highlight skills and experiences in the body of your cover letter even if you don't have any actual work experience.

Here's how:

- **List volunteer experiences and skills gained through each.** You can also briefly explain how these skills are relevant to the program.
- **Include extra-curricular activities.** Showcase those where you had an active or leadership role, and describe competencies gained through each.
- **List relevant awards and recognitions.** Pick only those that communicate strengths applicable to the internship | [Skip to content](#)



## What's a good cover letter email format?

A cover letter email format should be brief and clear, while effectively showcasing your suitability for the job through relevant skills and experience. There is no set format to follow when writing a cover letter email, but we recommend the following:

- Salutation
- Body section where you can share your interest in the role and your relevant skills
- Closing where you mention important attachments, such as a resume



## 18 Free Cover Letter Templates That Will Actually Get You Interviews

By using one of our simple, easy-to-read templates, you'll significantly improve the chances that your cover letter will successfully pass through an ATS and into the hands of a hiring manager.

**Try our cover letter templates today!**

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