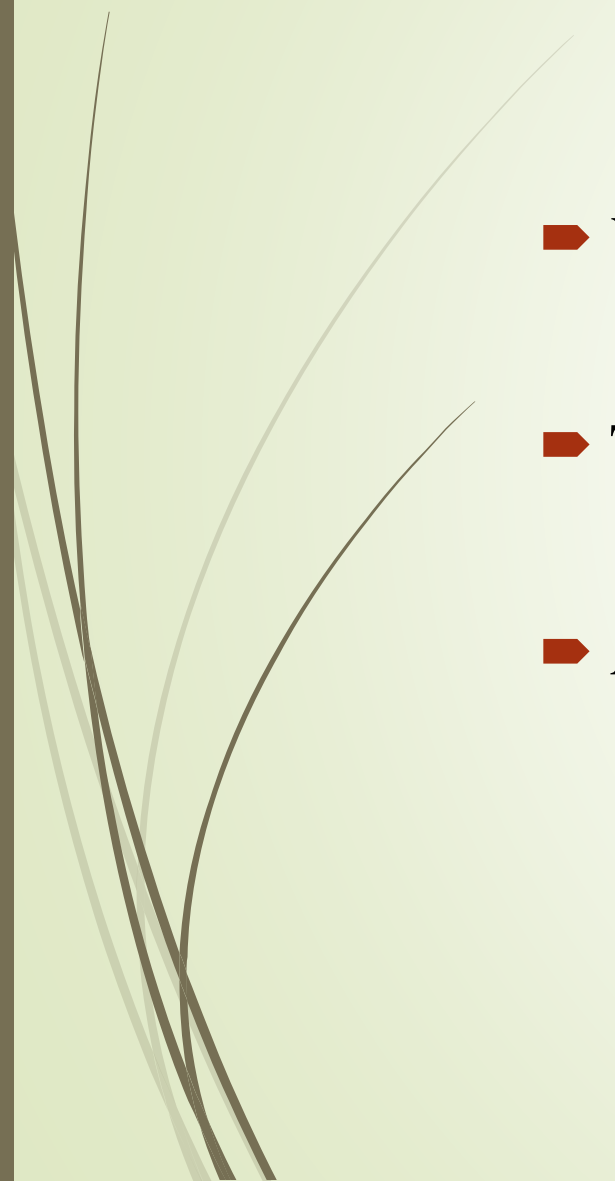




Cover Letter



What is a Cover Letter?

- Your formal introduction
 - The first read, it can make or break your entry
 - A 'must' with your resume
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Cover Letter (Letter of Application)

- Your resume is the central part of your job search; however, a cover letter gives you the chance to elaborate beyond what's in your resume and focus the employer's attention on the skills and experiences you have that directly relate to the position. It also provides the opportunity for you to showcase your writing and communication talents.



Purpose

The cover letter accompanies your resume and its purposes are to:

- demonstrate a match between the employer's needs and your attributes
 - demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and why you would be a good "fit" if hired
 - showcase your communication skills, writing ability, and writing style
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- Remember that the purpose of your cover letter is to complement your resume -- not to repeat it. Your cover letter and resume are “siblings,” in that they’re related but have different features and characteristics.



Resume vs. Cover Letter

Resume

- “Matter-of-Fact” Document
- Skills, Experiences, Education
- Include Scope, Size, and Achievements

Cover Letter

- Enthusiastic, Passionate, Persuasive
- How your Skills meet the position Needs
- How and Why you can help



Reasons to send

- Discover Job openings
- Initiate contacts
- Respond to an advertisement
- Follow up a referral by personal contact or employment agency

When a Cover Letter is Important

- 1. Include Extra Information:** A cover letter also gives you an opportunity to include details that your resume does not contain, like reason for relocation when applying from a distance.
- 2. Explain a Gap**
- 3. The employer may Expect One**



When Not to Include a Cover Letter

- 1. When the Employer Doesn't Want One**
 - 2. When You Don't Have Time**
 - 3. There's No Way to Upload One**
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Formality

- Addressed to a specific person
 - Using specific person by name is more effective
- Block format
- 3 – 4 paragraphs
- Resumes can be mass produced; cover letters are more personal.



Format

- Format: Use typical business formatting, beginning with the date, a return address, and the address of the recipient.
- Salutation: Address your letter to a specific individual, if possible, and preferably to someone with hiring authority. If you don't know who this is, call the Personnel Department of the district; they will have the information you require. Make sure spell the recipient's name correctly and that you know his or her correct title (Mr., Ms., etc.).



Opening Information

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Telephone Number

Current Date

Employer's Name

Title

Department

Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Mr./Ms./ Dr./ Individual's Name:



Sample Opening

1309 E. 10th Street
Bloomington, IN 47405
June 15, 2004



Ms. Sandra Jones
ABZ Company
New York, New York
00055

Dear Ms. Jones:



Paragraphs

- Opening Paragraph: Identify the position for which you are applying, indicate where you learned about the position, and write a bridge statement (a segue) referring to your qualifications
- *Limit paragraphs to two to five complete sentences*
- Indicate your knowledge of the company.
- Mention the name of a contact.
- Second Paragraph: Include briefly the reason why you are qualified for this position and outline previous work experiences that you think make you a perfect fit for the position. Make it catchy. Ensure that you look carefully at the job description or ad to construct sentences showing how your experience specifically matches what the district is seeking.

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- **Optional Paragraph:** This is the time to list your other qualifications, which may not be specifically necessary to the position, such as your transferable skills, membership in professional associations, volunteer work, etc. This may also be the time to exhibit your desire and enthusiasm for the job.
 - **Closing Paragraph:** Thank the individual for taking the time to review your letter, and create a clear and positive ending.



Closing

- Closing: Close your letter with “Sincerely” or “Respectfully Yours,” and type as well as sign your full name. (A potential district may feel offended or assume your document is a form letter if it’s received with no signature.)



Cover Letter Mechanics

- Limit to 1 page, and typically 3 to 4 paragraphs.
- Address your cover letter to a specific person
- Tell employer the type of position you are seeking and if you read in a newspaper or someone mentioned it to you.
- Include one or two unique qualifications you have and how these relate to the position. Go beyond and highlight your specific qualifications.
- Be brief, to the point and businesslike. No errors!
- Include your contact information and you will follow up within one week.
- Be positive, enthusiastic and professional in your letter.
- Sign your letter.