

Cover Letter Tips

1. Target your letter to the job

Research has shown that generic cover letters that are not targeted to a specific employer don't work. Take the time to customize your cover letters for each job that you apply to. Include in your cover letter skills and experience that is clearly connected to the job you're applying for.

2. Don't just restate your résumé

Use your cover letter as an opportunity to make a great first impression. A well written cover letter which clearly states your motivations for applying to the particular position will increase the chances that an employer will read your full résumé. Most employers read the cover letter first, so your cover letter is also a great opportunity for you to highlight your most significant qualifications related to the position that you are applying to.

3. Choose the right type of cover letter

There are different types of cover letters that can be used to apply for advertised and unadvertised positions. Select the type of cover letter that suits your situation best. For examples of broadcast, bulleted, comparison and full sentence cover letters check out Employment Resource Centre Cover Letter Help Booklet for samples.

4. Do your research

Find out some information about the company or organization you are applying to, as well as the industry that they are a part of. With this information you can target your cover letter to not only demonstrate your enthusiasm for the opportunity to work with the company, but also to show how you could be a good fit with the company's workplace culture.

5. Follow instructions

Be sure to include any information that was requested in the job posting. If the posting asked for your availability, salary expectations and/or a specific licence/certification, be sure to include this information in your letter. In addition to an application deadline, employers typically state a specific method for submitting your resume and cover letter in the job posting. Follow their instructions carefully in order to demonstrate your attention to detail.

6. Format

Be brief; keep your cover letter to one page in length, because if it is any longer than this an employer may not even read it. Include the same contact information section found on the top of your resume on your cover letter as well to ensure a professional looking letter.

7. Proof read, Proof read, Proof read!

Don't rely on your computer's spellchecking software to catch all of the mistakes. Have a friend or family member also read your cover letter to make sure that it is communicating exactly what you intend.