



COVER LETTERS: AN INTRODUCTION

When you reach out to a company, you want to tell a story about how you are going to fulfill their needs. Your resume is easy to scan and consume, but it doesn't always tell the right story for the company by itself. You have a really interesting and unique background into tech so the cover letter is the best place to start the story you want to tell and tailor it to each specific company.

here's what to consider:

1. Understand the mission and values of the company
2. Understand the company's needs and what problem/challenge they are solving
3. Why are they hiring (i.e. are they growing, did they lose someone, are they always hiring for great talent? Do you have a perspective)
4. what skill might they be missing (do you know tools that you can teach? Do you have a unique perspective/skill that would add thought value? Do you have leadership experience? Do you have strong domain skills that relate to their problem?)

The goal is to identify and outline why your interests and values align with their mission: why your skills and strengths will contribute to their business; why your experiences will inspire their team. The challenge is to keep this story short and to the point. 2 paragraphs (this is an excellent time to review the results of your, ["Building your Narrative" assignment](#))

Here's a suggested outline with an example

First Paragraph. why you want to work at the company --point to something that personalizes your interest to the company. (Perhaps it's because of the people, team, culture or Perhaps it's because of the mission, product or service. Once you identify it--can you point to a specific example?

- *I've used your services for years and have always been passionate about XYZ. Recently I listened to your CEO speak on XYZ podcast about the work your company is doing to advance renewable energy and saving turtles. This talk made me think about how amazing your company is and I said to myself, "I want to work with this team who really care about what they do!" I'm excited for this opportunity to apply to join your software team and leverage my unique professional experience and technical skills to support the creation and advancement of your software technology and services.*

Second Paragraph, why the company wants to hire you - here turn the focus to your experience, skills, and strengths. This is a perfect time to direct to your software projects. The real goal of your story is to convince the company you can fulfill their needs. Highlight the exact things you want to bring to the company, whether it's knowledge of some tech, domain knowledge, a process you follow, or whatever else you think might work to help solve their problems and contribute to their team.

- *I'm a dedicated and trusted professional with a history of exceeding expectations. I began my career in the Personal Care Services industry as a Stylist but as a result of my high EQ , strong customer service skills and natural sales skills I was promoted to lead professional development training to employees across multiple locations. Recently I graduated from an intensive full stack coding bootcamp where I was challenged to learn multiple software languages and tools including technology that aligns with your company, Java and React.JS. Not only did I prove my strong programming abilities by earning the bootcamp's highest possible knowledge certificate, a "Triple Black Belt" but I was offered a position to continue as a Teaching Assistant. As a developer I'm passionate about creating engaging software solutions that are socially impactful (here's a link to one of [my projects](#), a website that allows users to learn anything!) To learn more about me, here is my [LinkedIn](#) and [personal site](#). I Look forward to hearing from you soon!*

Cover letter Jedi mind trick: always write the letter as if you have no doubt the company will hire you - avoid language like, "If you have any further questions, don't hesitate to reach out," etc.

One of our recent TechTalk speakers, Jon Khaykin (a software developer/hiring manager) created a few sample cold emails that he shared with me. Cold outreach emails are very similar to a cover letter. [Here are his samples](#)--he suggested that you use something like these when you reach out via email to potential hiring managers/colleagues trying to secure "informational interviews." As you can see from these examples, draw parallel to a cover letter --> 2 paragraphs, identify something specific about the company, tell why you are interesting and give an example.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

Muse article: <https://www.themuse.com/advice/cover-letter-examples-every-type-job-seeker>

Your Header (match resume)

Date

Employer Name

Employer Address

Employer Address Line Two

Dear _____:

First Paragraph Text (your hook/why)

Second Paragraph Text (your relevant skills that align with the job description)

Potential Third Paragraph Text

Polite Sign-Off (Sincerely, Best Regards, Respectfully, etc.),

Your Name