

## Cover Letter Writing Guide

Your cover letter is a tool to introduce your resume, explain why you are writing, and ask for a specific action, consideration, or response from the person to whom you are writing. Always send a cover letter with your resume. Use this worksheet as a guide to help you gather the information you need to write your cover letter.

### Cover Letter Basics

- A cover letter usually consists of three parts: introduction, body, and closing.
- Focus your letter on how your qualifications will make the employer better.
- The cover letter should be no longer than one page. Make sure you write a clear, concise letter, saying what you need to in as few words as possible.
- Try to limit the number of times you use the word “I.” Rule of thumb is no more than 2 times per paragraph.
- Tailor your cover letter to the job description. Use key words.
- Proofread!

### Contact Name/Company Address

- Address your letter to a specific individual. Never say “To whom it may concern.” If the job posting does not name a specific person, send it to “Hiring Representative” or “Hiring Manager.” Or use a subject line instead (Re: Name of the Position).

### Introduction (1 paragraph)

- Have an opening sentence that states what position you are applying for and includes how you heard about the position.
- Use an “umbrella statement” that will open the door for you to talk about why the employer should hire you in the body of the letter. This statement should be bold and catchy, so it entices them to read the rest of your letter.

### Body (1-2 paragraphs)

- This paragraph should include some key strengths/qualifications that do not mirror the resume and are directly relevant to the position. Use key words that are in the job description.
- Anywhere you can back up what you say you can do, you should. Try to give an example that verifies what you have accomplished.
- Relate how your skills/experience will benefit the employer. How will hiring you make them better?
- Clinicals, internships, externships, and on-the-job training are excellent experiences to reference.
- You can also reference education and other training, if relevant to the position.
- Emphasize important parts or details that are not in your resume.

### **Closing (1 paragraph)**

- Reference that your resume is enclosed.
- Request an interview or time to meet.
- State that you will follow up with the employer.
- Thank them for their time and consideration.

### **Using AI to Help Write Your Cover Letter**

- Do not list personal information in any AI system
- Use AI prompts to help write *sections* of a cover letter not the *whole* letter (it should sound like you!):
  - AI can help rephrase generic statements into more specific, detailed statements
  - Fix grammar, spelling, and tense errors
  - Compare your cover letter to a job description, helping you tailor your skills and experience using key words from the job description

If you have questions or would like assistance with your cover letter, please contact:

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Room 460 (Across from Charley's Student Center)