

COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

A cover letter is an opportunity to fill in the blanks from your resume. Through a cover letter, you set yourself apart from other candidates by showing a potential employer the depth of your experience. Each letter must be unique to every position you apply to, and should only be about 3-5 paragraphs. When writing a cover letter follow the steps below:

PURPOSE OF A COVER LETTER

- Introduce yourself to the employer and state the position you are applying to.
- Express why you are interested in working for the organization.
- Emphasize your qualifications and how they contribute to the organization. Request an interview.

HELPFUL HINTS

- Address each letter to a specific person, using their title, and organization using a business letter format.
- Ask others to proofread the letter for clarity, grammar, and spelling.
- Include a cover letter unique to each position when submitting a resume to an employer.

SAMPLE FORMAT

Your address
Your phone number
Date

Employer's name
Employer's title
Organization name
Address:

Dear Mr. /Ms. (or Hiring Manager):

YOUR PITCH: State the reason you are writing. Attract the employer's attention by pitching the letter to his or her needs or interests, rather than to your career goals. Tell the employer why you want to work for them.

YOUR EXPERIENCE: Explain how your abilities, background, and qualifications will enable you to contribute to the organization. Describe how your specific skills, strengths, or personal attributes are relevant to the position. You may emphasize one or two items from your resume, but try not to be redundant. The cover letter supplements your resume, highlighting your special qualities that might help persuade an employer to contact you. Try to pick two or three key experiences that directly speak to the job description. Keep it oriented to the employer's needs!

YOUR CONCLUSION: Reiterate your interest and ask for an interview at the employer's convenience. Provide contact information (email and phone number) where the employer can easily reach you. Thank the employer for his/her consideration.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name typed

Your email Address