

WRITING AN EFFECTIVE

Cover Letter



Writing an Effective Cover Letter

Cover letters act as an introduction to your resume. It shows that you have basic writing and communication skills. It makes the reader see how you stand out from the other candidates. It puts a bit of your personality out there to go with your resume.

Here's the secret: half the people you send a cover letter to won't read it. But those that do will most likely scrutinize it. So make sure the letter is well written and balanced.

Your goal with a cover letter is to convince the reader:

- that you have what it takes to not only meet the basic qualifications, but also be wildly successful in the job
- you will fit in with the company's culture and the team you will be working on
- to call you in for an interview.

10 Tips for Writing a Cover Letter

one

Make sure you research the company (the company culture) and fully understand the job description before you start writing.

two

Keep it simple – one page, three paragraphs, one inch margins, 11-12 point font and same heading as your resume.

three

Always address it to a specific person – do not send it "to whom it may concern" or "sir / madam." You can always find a name online or by calling the HR department and asking the name of the hiring manager.

four

Open strong! You want the hiring manager to continue reading, so start with a strong statement about why you are perfect for the job.

five

Make sure you state what position you are applying for and how you heard about the job.

six

Mention anyone you know who works for the company and how your conversations with them led you to apply for the position due to a good culture fit.

seven

Sell yourself by matching your skills to the qualifications they are looking for. Emphasize the personal value you will bring to the position. Share an accomplishment that shows exactly why you are the perfect candidate for the job.

eight

State the challenge the job exists to solve – and how you would go about addressing it.

nine

If you have a significant and obvious gap in your employment, give a simple explanation.

ten

If asked to list salary requirements, research salary ranges using Payscale.com, Salary.com, professional associations and informational interviews. Give a range you are comfortable with based on your research.





eight
cover
letter
DON'TS

- 01 **DON'T**
try to be funny.
Humor does not always translate well on paper.
- 02 **DON'T**
send a generic letter to every company you
apply for.
- 03 **DON'T**
lie or over-exaggerate information.
- 04 **DON'T**
talk about why you left past jobs.
- 05 **DON'T**
mention salary unless it is explicitly asked for.
- 06 **DON'T**
get overly personal.
- 07 **DON'T**
repeat your resume.
- 08 **DON'T**
make it too long – no one will read it.

Step-by-Step Cover Letter:

Paragraph 1: Open strong and draw the reader in. Describe the job you are applying for, including the position and job title. Tell them how you found out about the opening and any personal or professional connection you have at the company.

When I saw the posting for a Marketing Director at Healthy Kids on the healthcare news website, I knew I had to submit my resume. As a hard-working and enthusiastic marketing expert with over eight years of experience, I am ready for my next adventure! I am currently looking for an opportunity that allows me to combine my marketing expertise and interest in ensuring a healthy lifestyle for the next generation. After speaking with your CFO Susan Mello, I know my skills and experiences would be a good fit for the position and the "Healthy Kids" team overall.

Paragraph 2: Introduce yourself and tell your potential employer why you are qualified to do the job you are applying for. Tell them what you have to offer by matching your skills and strengths to the qualifications of the position. Highlight an accomplishment. State the challenge the job exists to solve and how you will solve it.

My strengths lie in my ability to conceive and implement strategic plans that identify new market opportunities and negotiate strategic partnerships to drive business. My interest in working for Healthy Kids extends beyond my desire to simply be a Marketing Director. As a parent, I have found some of the health information out there is either not based on facts or very technical. Having honed my writing skills working for a bio-math company, I love to take complex scientific data and turn it accessible information. If hired, I would be proud to be a part of a team that is dedicated to making health information for children easier to access.

Paragraph 3: If needed, here is where you can explain away any obvious concerns an employer might have about your ability to do the job. Do not bring up any negative information that is not noticeable. If the posting asked for you address a specific issue, you can do that here, as well.

After stepping away from the workforce to start a family, I am eager to resume my professional career now that my children are in school. I have kept my skills and connections current through online classes, professional conferences, and active volunteer work, including marketing roles at local non-profit organizations.

Final paragraph: Wrap up your letter. Add a link to a personal website or your LinkedIn profile. Thank them for considering you for the job and let them know the best way to reach out to you with any questions or concerns not addressed in your letter/resume. Let them know how you plan to follow up with them.

Thank you for taking the time to review my resume and consider me for this position. You can contact me with any questions by emailing me at email@gmail.com or by calling me at 555-555-5555. If you have a moment, please take a look at my website which has additional samples of my work mymarketingwebsite.com

I look forward to the possibility of discussing this exciting opportunity with you.

Highlight an accomplishment. State the challenge the job exists to solve and how you will solve it.

