



Prepare an Effective Cover Letter

A cover letter allows you to personalize your résumé. Its main purpose is to emphasize your strengths and assets in a way that will interest employers in interviewing you.

1. **To attract the reader's attention, the cover letter must look good and be easy to read.** Pay particular attention to spelling, grammar, punctuation, spacing, paragraph length, and margins. Address it to a particular person by name, making sure that the spelling and title of the individual are correct. A good cover letter is not too long, so try to limit yours to a single page.
2. **The first paragraph should arouse the reader's interest.** State some particular knowledge you have of the reader's business, or comment on a "timely" issue relating to the company's operation.
3. **The body of the cover letter should explain what you can do for the company.** Put yourself in the employer's position as you write. Present facts that will be interesting and that accurately describe your assets and qualifications. Your prospective employer will be interested in your ability to make or save money, conserve time, and effectively assume and delegate responsibility. Do not stress weaknesses, such as lack of experience.
4. **The last paragraph should request action.** Ask for an interview, and state specific times and dates when you will call to arrange an interview (allow at least three business days from the day you send the letter). In all circumstances be courteous, but be direct.

The letter should end with the formal salutation "Sincerely." Below the salutation, type your name and then add your signature.