

Cover Letters



Why do I need a cover letter?

A cover letter introduces you to your potential employer. It allows you to make links between your skills, education, experience and the employer's needs, based on the job posting. The cover letter is an opportunity to demonstrate your communication skills by describing your selling features in greater detail. You should include a personalized cover letter for every job you apply to.

Before you start writing

Preparation is key when it comes to writing a great cover letter, so take the necessary time to research the following:

The Candidate - YOU!

- You are trying to sell yourself as the best candidate for the position, so know what your most valuable features and most transferable skills are
- It can be helpful to prepare a list of the skills you possess that match what the employer is looking for, that way you will be sure to include all relevant points in your letter

The Position

- Review the job posting you are applying to so you can determine exactly what the employer is looking for, as well as the benefit you would bring to the company
- Take note of key words and use them in your letter; key words are any word in the posting that is underlined, bolded, italicized or repeated

The Company

- Visit the company's website - what are the mission, vision, and values of the company?
- What is the company posting about on their social media platforms? what are employees, customers or clients posting about their experience with the company? Has the company recently been in the news?
- If something impresses you, feel free to mention it in your cover letter

The Industry

- Learn about the trends, familiarize yourself with industry specific language, and know what is happening in the local labour market so you are knowledgeable about the field in general - don't forget to use this information in your cover letter!

Where to begin?

You have completed your research, know your most valuable features and are ready to start writing. Now what? Employers are looking for the perfect candidate to fill their vacant position, but before they can choose you, they need to know:

Who are you?
What can you do for me?
When will I see results?
Where have you learned your skills? Why do you want to work for me?
How will you help me?

Answering these questions through your writing will provide the employer with an exact understanding of how you as a candidate will benefit them and their business.



What does it look like?

A cover letter is a formal business document. It should be written in a format that appears professional and that is consistent with your resume. Follow the example below:

YOUR NAME
Your Address 519-111-2222, your.name@gmail.com
Date of Writing
Employer's Name Employer's Title Company Name City, Province
Dear Mr. / Ms. (Last Name of Employer)
INTRODUCTION – Name the position you are applying for and how you heard of the opening. Explain why you are interested in the position and/or company.
BODY – Tell the employer what skills, abilities, knowledge, education and experience that you offer that relate to the job. Use action verbs to describe your skills and provide examples of how you have demonstrated them. Avoid starting every sentence with the word “I”. This is your opportunity to explain how you meet the requirements needed to be successful on the job and what value you add to the company. Refer to your attached resume for more information.
CLOSING – Summarize your qualifications, restate your interest and then encourage an interview by giving your phone number and offering your availability to meet.
Sincerely, Your Name

Use the same header as your resume
NO personal details (photo, age, race, marital status, SIN, immigration status etc.)

Always include a cover letter with your resume when you apply for a job

Research to find out the employer's name, if unsuccessful, use “Dear Hiring Manager” or “Dear Human Resources”

Use formal business letter format, the same font as your resume and keep the cover letter to one page in length

The cover letter is a one-time-use document, so repeat the process for every job you apply to

So how can you stand out from the competition?

An employer can receive 100 or more applications for every job they post, so make sure your cover letter is interesting! To ensure you stand out from the other applicants:

- Highlight industry specific skills
- Relate to your potential employer
- Show that you are a great fit with the company
- Draw attention to your qualifications
- Focus on the skills asked for in the job posting
- Give examples when discussing skills
- Proof read your work to make sure you do not have any spelling or grammatical errors

If you have questions or would like to have your cover letter reviewed, please contact us!