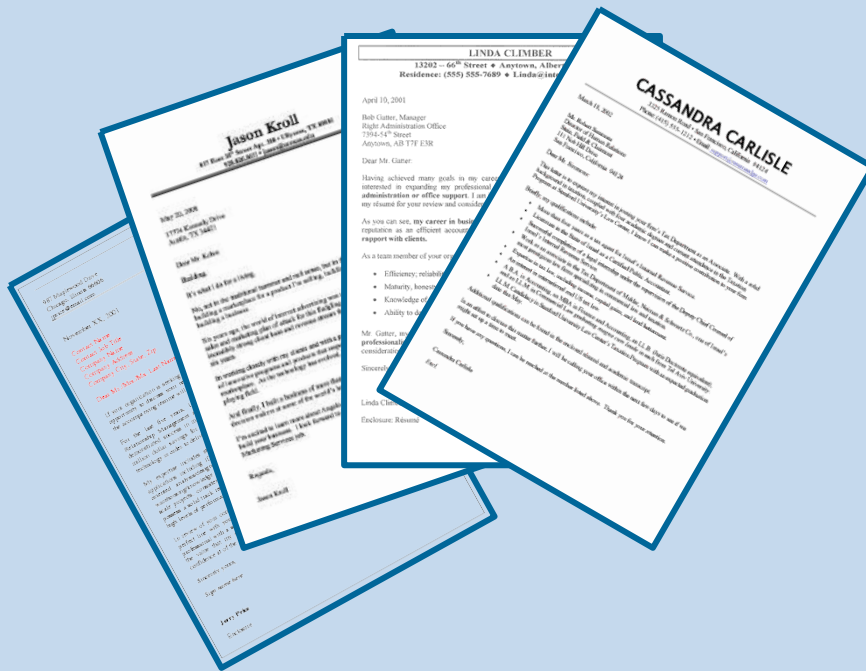


How to Write a Cover Letter



Revised April 2010

What is a Cover Letter?

- A cover letter is a letter sent alongside your resume to introduce yourself, explain why you are sending in your resume, and provide more information about yourself.



What's the Point of a Cover Letter?

- Introduce yourself
 - Cover letters should carry a message about you
- Get you noticed
 - Project the desired image of you or your business
- Convey special information
- Highlight accomplishments
- Get employers, award judges and scholarship committees to read your resume



Stylish Cover Letters



- Block Style
 - All lines start on the left side of the margin
 - No indentations
- Modified Block Style
 - Uses indentations
 - Each paragraph is indented, as well as the beginning information and the close



Helpful Hints:



- **Be assertive** – the first 20 words are the most important
- **Value to employer** – tell your story in relation to how you can be of value to the employer
- Use **simple** and **direct** language and grammar
- Let your letter **reflect your individuality**
- Send it to someone by **name**
- **Get it right** – spell recipient's name right
- Be **friendly**, not pushy
- **Target your letter** – tell your reasons for sending the letter, for example, desiring an interview

Don't Forget to...

- Use good grammar and correct spelling
- Do not use slang
- Be brief, but cover the subject
- Stick to the point of the letter
- Proofread, proofread, proofread!
- Ask for help if you need it
- Strive for neatness and personality



You Should Include...



- Your address and the date the letter was written
- The name and address of the person to whom the letter is being sent
- A salutation (Dear _____,)
- The body of the letter
- A complimentary close and signature
- A title of respect, such as Dr., Mr., or Ms.
- A return address and zip code
- Can also include reference initials, enclosure notifications (such as your resume), copy and postscript

The Body of the Letter

- **First paragraph** – reason for writing
- **Second paragraph** – point out qualifications
- **Third paragraph** – call attention to resume, reiterate interest

Your street address
Your city, state, zip code

Month, Day, Year

Mr./Ms./Dr. Name
Title
Name of company/organization
Company address
City, State, Zip code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name:

Paragraph 1: Answers “Why am I writing?”

- Identify the position and the company
- Indicate how you learned about the position
- Request the employer’s consideration
- Introduce basic information about yourself

Paragraph 2: Answers “Who am I, and why should you hire me?”

- Contain a brief summary of your personal data and work experience.
- Relate your skills, experiences, and qualities that would benefit you in this position

Paragraph 3: Answers “What is my next step?”

- Refer the reader to your enclosed resume
- Reiterate your interest in the position
- Specify how you will follow up

Sincerely,
Your signature

Your name
Telephone number
Email address