



## Cover Letters

### BASIC GUIDELINES

- Cover letters are a way to give employers a better sense of your background and expand on specific experiences from the jobs/positions already on your resume.
- The content should make clear, detailed connections between specific points on your resume and how great you will be at this new job.
- You are also giving employers a glimpse into your voice and your strengths in communication; aim to impress with your writing.
- A cover letter should be tailored to each specific job application. Don't just submit the exact same cover letter to multiple job openings; really think about what each individual employer is looking for.
  - Use company language from your potential employer.
  - Include skills you know will be important in the position you hope to get.
- It's important to look at example cover letters from your field. Talk to someone you know in the field or use online examples from the Carson College of Business or the Academic Success and Career Center (ASCC).

### WHAT SHOULD I INCLUDE?

**Contact Information** - your own and that of the person you're writing to

**Greeting Introduction** - Identify yourself, what position you're applying for, and a brief explanation of who you are (e.g., junior at WSU studying hospitality/business management) and/or a single sentence preview of why you are ideal for this job.

**Education** – If relevant to the position, discuss your degree's application to the job or related coursework. For example, if you are applying to work at a hotel over the summer and you are a hospitality business major, you can say something like:

*As a hospitality business management major, I have studied how important customer service is to the value of a hotel's business. It is because of this that I will be able to provide 5-Star service to all the visitors of the Hampton Resort.*

\*Remember, the most important thing is to relate your education to the job requirements.

**Experience** – This is similar to the education section, but instead elaborate on any relevant experience you have (professional, volunteer, or otherwise) and how it sets you up to excel in this particular job. Education and experience can be organized in any way you see fit.

**Conclusion** – Thank them for their time and consideration and include your next step. If you're going to email them, mention that. If you are going to wait for them, mention that. Whatever the plan, make sure to execute!

### \*THIS SHOULD FEEL LIKE BRAGGING!!\*

You are trying to convince employers that you are the best person for the position.



## Example Cover Letter Formatting

### (Heading)

Your Name

Street Address

City, State Zip Code

[You can replace the above information with the heading from your resume]

Date

Hiring Manager's Name

Hiring Manager's Title

Company Name

Company Street Address

City, State Zip Code

### (Body)

Dear [Insert Hiring Manager's name if known],

1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph – State the reason for writing. Name the specific position or type of work for which you're applying. Mention how you learned of the job opening. If you know someone in the organization, consider mentioning your connection here.

2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph – Explain why you're interested in working for this employer and specify how you fit this position. Mention one or two of your qualifications you think would be of greatest interest to the organization, tailoring your wording to incorporate the keywords they used in the job description. Don't just repeat the information on your resume; connect it to the skills needed for this job. Include something special or unique about yourself that will benefit the employer. Additionally, you might include something about your personality to indicate how you would fit within the organization. Remember, the reader will consider this not only an opportunity to gain more insights into you as an applicant but also into your writing skills.

Last Paragraph – Make your closing statement strong and specific so that the reader will likely take action. Be sure to communicate your plan to follow up. You might state that you'll be in the area on a certain date and would like to set up a meeting, or you'll call on a certain date to set up a meeting, or you'll wait for them to reach out. Finally, thank the hiring manager for their time.

### (Closing)

Sincerely,

[Insert signature]

Your name typed