

# How to Write a GREAT Cover Letter!

Many Job seekers believe that a cover letter is about them. It's not. The cover letter is about the employer and their needs and you need to show that you are knowledgeable about both!

## Before you start, you need to DO YOUR RESEARCH!

- Who is the employer? What do they do? What does the department you are applying to do? What are their missions and goals? How do you plan on contributing to that mission through the available position?
- Think about the position. What qualifications is the employer seeking? Don't list all your experiences and skills, but pick ones that are relevant to the position. Brainstorm specific skills that would make you stand out from the pile.
- Explicitly state why you want the job and why you are qualified.

## Next, review the Cover Letter Dos & Don'ts:

### COVER LETTER DOs & DON'Ts

#### DO

- Design your resume and cover letter to look like a pair
- Address your letter to a specific person, using the titles "Mr." or "Ms."
- Keep the letter to one page maximum.
- Research the position and company or school before writing.
- Remember that your cover letter is a great way of personalizing your resume!

#### DON'T

- Copy your resume! Think of the cover letter as the "glue" between the job description and your resume.
- Address your letter "To Whom It May Concern".
- Address female recipients as "Mrs." unless instructed to do so.
- Talk only about yourself – the letter is about a relationship between you and the employer

## The Heading and Proper Salutations

The top of your cover letter should have your name and contact information in the same format as your resume.

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The **name** and **address** of the hiring professional should follow in the top left portion of the page.

The **date** the cover letter will be sent goes here.

“Mr.” “Ms.” or “Dr.” John Doe,

The first paragraph is your introduction. It should be short and include answers to the following questions. What position are you seeking? How did you learn about the position? Why are you writing this letter in the first place? Why are you interested?

In your second and third paragraphs you should connect the position to your qualifications. Do this by:

- Summarizing your knowledge about the position and organization.
- Summarizing your strongest qualifications for the position.
- Outlining specific skills that you have that are indicated in the job description.

In your third/fourth paragraphs you should state your interest in an interview and when and how you will be following up. Don't forget to provide useful contact information, such as an email address and/or your phone number.

“Sincerely”,

Your Name

Never address the cover letter to “Whom it May Concern”! If you cannot find the name of the hiring professional or are unsure, use “Dear Hiring Manager” or another title instead.

### Need help? Contact the Career Advancement Center!

Come to Express Advising Monday-Friday 11-1 in the Senior 25 Lounge or make an appointment to review your draft with a CAC advisor.

It is critical to have a trustworthy source review your cover letter to ensure that you are presenting yourself effectively.

### Add needed details, review, and edit!

- Make sure to perform a spell and grammar check.
- Have someone read over your cover letter, whether it is a friend or someone at the CAC!