



Cover letter hints

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1. No mistakes.

Be sure to spell-check and grammar-check your letter. In addition, have someone else read through it because spell-checkers and grammar-checkers are not goof-proof.

2. Never send a resume to a recruiter without a cover letter.

If a cover letter is optional through an online application system, consider it mandatory.

3. Keep the letter to three paragraphs, or one page, whichever is less.

The typical cover letter has three paragraphs, each with two or three sentences:

1. Introduction
 - Identifying the purpose of the letter and the position to which you are applying.
 - Indicate how you learned of this position, and that you reviewed the qualifications and that you meet these qualifications.
 - If the position has a position number, include this also.
2. Highlight of your background or experience
 - Do not rehash your resume.
 - Highlight items that you believe relate to the position.
3. Indication that your interest in the position, availability, and contact information
 - If you are applying for a full-time position, indicate your graduate date. If you applying for an internship, indicate first day of availability.
 - You can offer to send in a writing sample and references, but do not include references with your letter.
 - Thank the person for taking the time to consider you for the position.

4. Address the letter to a specific person, if possible.

- Do not use salutations that refer to gender if you do not know the identity of the recruiter; use generic salutations in these cases, e.g., “To whom it may concern” or “Dear Personnel Manager”
- When referring to a female, don’t presume “Mrs.” Use the safer “Ms.”
- Avoid “Sir” and “Madam”.

5. Do not use hyperboles.

Leave off bragging, such as “excellent work ethic”, “superior intellectual ability.”

6. If the cover letter is in email, keep it brief.

Be brief, but do not leave out important information.

7. Sign all letters that you will send by postal mail.