

Cover Letters



What is a Cover Letter?

- A cover letter expresses your interest in and qualifications for a position to a prospective employer
- A cover letter should introduce the main points of your resume
- It should help you to market your qualifications to the prospective employer

Cover Letter Basics

- Heading
- Inside Address
- Salutation
- Paragraph #1
- Paragraph #2
- Paragraph #3
- Closing
- Signature

Heading, Address & Salutation

Examples of...

Heading:

Address

City, State, Zip

Date

Salutation:

Dear Mr.

Dear Mrs.

Dear Ms.

Inside Address:

Name of Individual

Company

Address

City, State, Zip

Main Body of Cover Letter

Keep it brief!

Paragraph #1 – Reference the position and note how you found out about the job

Paragraph #2 – Why are you interested in the position and what are your qualifications

Paragraph #2 or 3 – Support your qualifications with examples of experience

Paragraph #4 – Restate your interest in the position and request an interview

Cover Letter Closing

Closing:

Use “sincerely” to close letter

Leave 4 lines between sincerely & your signature

Signature:

Type your name & write your signature directly above

Enclosures:

List “Enclosures” – Resume, References

Cover Letter Tips

- Address letter to an individual not a company
- Keep letter to one page
- Customize the letter for each application
- Do not repeat the resume, highlight it!
- Stress the positive

Key Points to Remember

1. **Tell them why you are writing** — Be specific about the job you are applying for
2. **Tell them how you fit** — Connect your background, skills & experiences to the position you are applying for
3. **Give examples of fit** — Cite specific work experiences that illustrate your fit for the position
4. **Use their words** — Use the job description to help make the connection between your experiences and their employee wish-list

Key Points (cont)

5. **Answer obvious questions** — Answer any questions that your application raises, such as, “why is a person with a Masters degree applying for this position?”
6. **Appeal to company values, attitudes & goals**
7. **Show off your writing skills** — the cover letter should be an example of your finest written work.

Need More Help?

Contact Your Career Services Advisor!

Offering Assistance in:

- ✓ Job & Internship Searches
- ✓ Resume & Cover Letter Writing
- ✓ Interviewing Preparation
- ✓ Career Center Resource Library

For more information contact Heather Flynn, Paul Clayton Building,
503-748-1581 or flynnh@ohsu.edu