

Cover Letter Guidelines

Your sales pitch and writing sample in one!

Write your cover letter to **communicate how you are prepared and fit for the job**. While cover letters follow a typical format, you have the opportunity to **convey your professional personality** with carefully chosen words.

The Professional Cover Letter

Do your homework first

- Use the Professional Job Search Worksheet to write your resume with qualifications and experiences that match the job as closely as possible.
- Get a deeper understanding of the job and the needs and values of the company by researching the company and other similar companies and job descriptions.
- Highlight what you think the company's biggest needs are for this position and state how you can offer them solutions.

Communicate that you are the perfect fit

- Express your personality through adverbs and adjectives that convey your work ethic, knowledge of the company and their needs.
- Write one or two examples of your job experiences that demonstrate your qualifications and skills.

It's your writing sample

- Effectively and concisely demonstrate your writing skills through persuasive and respectful content.
- The cover letter should be close to one half page and in a 10-12pt typeface that matches your resume.

It must be perfect

- Employers are likely to pass over an application with minor grammatical or typing errors such as an incorrect capitalization or misspelling.
- Have a few people review your cover letter. Resources include the Career Development Office, PACE center, a mentor, friends or family.

Review the cover letter guide on the back of this page for additional information about formatting and content.

Cover letter guidelines

Addressing the Recipient

- Try to locate the name of the person who will ultimately review your resume.

Paragraph One

- Introduce yourself and state the position you are applying for and how you heard about the company/position.
- Specifically address why you are interested in the company/position.

Paragraph Two

Highlight aspects of the company that relate to the job description and give two examples of how your unique skills and accomplishments fit their needs.

Paragraph Three

Summarize with a strong closing sentence about your value to the company or restate how you can and want to be of service.

- Provide your contact info and thank the reader for their time and consideration.

Additional Resource

- <https://www.themuse.com/advice/7-cover-letter-mistakes-entrylevel-candidates-makeand-how-to-fix-them-now>

Cover Letter Sample

CHATHAM STUDENT

Woodland Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15232 ▪ (C) 740-769-2801 ▪ Taylorlsmith@chatham.edu

Month, Day, Year

Taylor L. Smith
Woodland Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Name of person whom you want to review your resume

Person's professional title

Organization

Address

City, state, zip code

Dear (Address formally -Mr., Mrs., Professor, etc. — unless you were instructed to use first name):

First Paragraph: State the reason for the letter, specific position or type of work for which you are applying and indicate from which resource (Career Development, news media, friend, alumni) you learned of the opportunity.

Second Paragraph: Find out who the organization is serving, how it performs compared to similar companies/agencies, what current trends affect that industry. Then indicate why you are interested in the position, the organization, its products or services--above *all what you can do for the employer*. Note how your work and field experiences/internship experiences, research projects/studies, volunteer activities, extracurricular background, and career aspirations relate to the organization's interests and goals. You will need to outline your strongest qualifications that match the position requirements. As much as possible, provide evidence of your related experiences and accomplishments. Refer to your enclosed resume, but try not to repeat the same information the reader will find in the resume verbatim. This section can be written in one paragraph or two short paragraphs.

Last Paragraph: Refer the reader to the enclosed resume or application or whatever media (i.e. reference list or written references; writing, publications, or work samples; portions of portfolio) you may be utilizing to present yourself. Indicate your desire for a personal interview and your flexibility as to the time and place. Repeat your phone number and/or e-mail in the letter and offer any assistance to help in a speedy response. For example, state that you will be in the city where the organization is located on a certain date and would like to set up an interview. Or, state that you will call on a certain date to set up an interview. Or, ask if the organization will be recruiting in your area. Finally, thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Signature (When emailing: It is optimal to scan in your signature. If you are unable to scan, choose a font that resembles handwriting. When mailing: Sign in black or blue ink.)

Taylor L. Smith