



**CAREER
CENTER**

Cover Letters

COVER LETTER

Depending on your particular purpose, a cover letter can be described as a letter of application or a letter of introduction. It might also be called a letter of intent, a letter of interest, or a letter of inquiry. It is a professional tool used when you are applying for a job (as a responder to a posted position) or when you are networking (as someone who is initiating contact with a prospective employer). When you send your resume to an employer, it should always be accompanied by a well-written one-page formal cover letter.

Whether it is a printed hard copy letter, a letter attached to an e-mail, or the text of an e-mail message, your cover letter should be written in standard professional business letter format. It should be a personal letter, but not written in an informal or casual style. It should be addressed to a specific individual, at a specific company or organization, and making reference to a specific job or opportunity.

Avoid salutations that sound too impersonal or too general, like *Dear Sir* or *Dear Sir/Madam* or *To Whom It May Concern*. The letter should be single spaced. Use active rather than passive voice. Edit carefully, double-checking for spelling, grammar, or typographical errors. When sending a printed hardcopy cover letter (or a cover letter document attached to an e-mail), the font, brand (style), and letterhead of your cover letter should match your resume.

PROPER FORMAT

The header (or letterhead) of your cover letter should match the header of your resume.

The first item under the header is the current date.

A formal cover letter has an address block, which includes the name and title of person and a mailing address.

The salutation should use a formal title (Mr., Ms., Dr.) followed by the person's last name.

The first paragraph is your objective. Tell the reason why you are writing the letter. It should be short, simple, and direct. Include the name of the company and the position or department in the description of your objective.

The second paragraph is your summary statement. It should be straight-forward and factual description of your qualifications. Provide a brief overview of your education, experience, and skills.

The third paragraph is your action statement. Express your desire for a meeting to learn more about the job and the company. Ask for the interview. Indicate that you will follow up.

End with a complimentary closing, such as *Sincerely*, *Cordially*, *Best Regards*, *Best Wishes*, or *Respectfully*.

Your Name

Your Address, City, State Zip Code
Phone Number, E-Mail Address

Date

Name
Title or Department
Company
Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear (Mr., Ms., Dr.) _____ :

Paragraph One. State your objective and mention the job position by specific title, by general function, or by department.

Paragraph Two. Give a brief summary or overview of your education, skills and experience as they relate to the job qualifications.

Paragraph Three. Express an interest in learning more about the company and the job. Request an interview. Indicate that you will follow up.

Sincerely,

Your Name

PROFESSIONAL LETTER WRITING

A cover letter can be mailed as a printed hard copy letter along with a resume in an envelope. It can be attached to an e-mail message along with an attached resume (both documents should be converted to PDF format). Or it can be the actual text in the body of an e-mail message. Regardless of the platform used, the tone, language, content, and organization of the cover letter must be professional.

If you are initiating contact with a prospective employer, your cover letter is a letter of introduction. It is sometimes called a networking letter. As such, its tone is more exploratory and open-ended and the language is more general.

If you are responding to a posted announcement, your cover letter is a letter of application. As such, its tone is slightly more assertive and the language is more specific.

INTRODUCTION LETTER

I am writing to express my interest in exploring career opportunities in (Area of Interest, Job Function, Name of Department) with (Name of Company).

I will be graduating in (Month and Year) from Birmingham-Southern College with a Bachelor of Science degree in (Major Concentration). I have comprehensive training in and a thorough academic knowledge of (Coursework, Curriculum, Academic Focus). I have extensive experience in (Job Functions, Specific Industry, Area of Specialty). I possess strong (Relevant Skills and Competencies) skills and excellent (Relevant Skills and Competencies) abilities.

I would like to meet with you at your convenience to learn more about (Name of Company) and opportunities in (Area of Interest, Job Function, Name of Department). I will contact you next week to follow up. Thank you for your consideration.

APPLICATION LETTER

I am writing to submit my application for the (Job Title) position with (Name of Company).

I will be graduating in (Month and Year) from Birmingham-Southern College with a Bachelor of Science degree in (Major Concentration). I have comprehensive training in and a thorough academic knowledge of (Coursework, Curriculum, Academic Focus). I have extensive experience in (Job Functions, Specific Industry, Area of Specialty). I possess strong (Relevant Skills and Competencies) skills and excellent (Relevant Skills and Competencies) abilities.

I would like to be considered for the (Job Title) position with (Name of Company). I feel confident I can meet your requirements. I look forward to hearing from you regarding my qualifications. Thank you for your consideration.

SAMPLE LETTER

I am writing to express my interest in exploring career opportunities in the Marketing Department of Superior Products Company.

I will be graduating in May 2018 from Birmingham-Southern College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. I have comprehensive training in and a thorough academic knowledge of marketing principles, brand management, advertising and promotions, market research, consumer behavior, and professional sales. I have extensive experience in sales, event planning, public relations, and customer service. I possess strong planning and organizational abilities and excellent administrative and interpersonal skills.

I would like to meet with you at your convenience to learn more about Superior Products Company and opportunities in marketing. I will contact you next week. Thank you for your consideration.

