

COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

Every resume should be accompanied with a **Cover Letter specifically tailored for the position**. A cover letter is a one-page, 3 or 4 paragraph letter introducing yourself to the employer. It should be error free and look professional. To create a cover letter that will gain interest, follow these suggestions:

- ✓ Create matching letterhead to be used on cover letter, resume, and reference page
- ✓ Use the same font and font size and print all three documents on the same paper
- ✓ Type your name then write your signature directly above the printed name using blue or black ink. If being sent via email, just type your name.
- ✓ Try to identify the name of the appropriate individual. Make it a rule to call the organization for correct spelling of names and complete addresses. This personal touch distinguished your letter and demonstrates your serious interest in this position. Avoid using "Personnel Manager," "Human Resources Department," or "To Whom it May Concern."
- ✓ Address your cover letter regarding the position if you cannot find a complete name and address. *Example:* Re: Administrative Assistant Position
- ✓ Using 'I', 'me' or 'my' too often can take away the reader's interest. Try wording this document so the focus is on the employer and what you can do for them.
- ✓ Keep your paragraphs short, 5 or 6 lines.

An opening that gains attention. State the reason you are writing and how you found out about the position. Be sure to include the job title or job code in this paragraph. *Examples:*

- Matthew Larson, a member of your Customer Service Department, told me Intel is seeking an experienced customer service representative. The attached summary of my qualifications demonstrates my preparation for this position.
- The September 10th issue of *The Washington Post* reports you are seeking a mature, organized, and reliable administrative assistant with excellent communication skills.
- Your advertisement for a Medical Assistant position Job Code 84777 posted on the LDS Business College Website immediately caught my attention because my skills and experience closely parallel your needs.
- For an unadvertised position: Could your rapidly expanding company use the services of an accounting clerk who offers over two years of accounting experience and proficiency in accounting programs such as Excel, Quattro Pro, and QuickBooks?

A body that builds interest. Describe your strongest qualifications. It is best if the qualifications you are describing are the ones that are asked for in the job description. Keep in mind that your resume emphasizes what you have done; your cover letter stresses what you can do for the employer. In the body of your letter, you will also want to discuss relevant personal traits. Employers are looking for candidates, who, among other things, are team players, take responsibility, show initiative and learn easily. *Examples:*

- Courses in business communication, report writing, and technical writing have helped me develop the research and writing skills required of your technical writer position.
- Successfully transcribing over 100 letters and memos in my college transcription class has given me strong experience in converting the spoken word into written work.

A closing that motivates action. Close with the next step you will take. Will you call them? Follow up by email? Will they call you? Thank the person reviewing your documents for their time and consideration. *Examples:*

- After you have read this brief description of my qualifications and my attached resume, I would like to meet with you to further discuss the opportunity to work for Jones Paint and Glass. Please call me at (405) 455-3999 before 10 a.m. or after 3 p.m. Monday through Friday to arrange an interview.
- Next week, after you have examined the attached resume, I will call you to discuss the possibility of arranging an interview.