



## How Do I Write a Cover Letter?



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Your cover letter is the place to sell your skills and show your interest in the position. It's a great chance to highlight achievements that would make you an ideal candidate for the job.

Always send a cover letter with your resume unless the job listing specifically says not to do so. But don't use the same one for each job. You need to write a targeted letter for each position.

### INCLUDE THESE IMPORTANT SECTIONS IN YOUR COVER LETTER:

- **Heading and greeting.** Include the date, your name, and your contact information. Address the letter to a specific person whenever possible. If you can't find an individual's name, use the job title of the recipient (Maintenance Supervisor, Office Manager), or perhaps "Human Resources" or "Search Committee." Do not address your letter to a business, a department, or "To Whom It May Concern."
- **Opening and introduction.** Explain who you are and your reason for writing, including how you found out about the position. Use the first paragraph to express your energy, enthusiasm, skills, education, and work experience that could contribute to the employer's success.
- **Body.** Sell yourself. Reveal why you are a perfect and unique match for the position. Explain why you have chosen the employer. Briefly summarize your talents, experience, and achievements.
- **Assertive closing.** Thank the person for taking the time to read your letter. Use an appropriate closing, such as "Sincerely." Tell the employer how you plan to follow-up.

## TYPES OF COVER LETTERS

- **Invited cover letter.** Use this format when responding to an ad or other listing. Describe how your qualifications meet the needs of the position.
- **Cold-contact cover letter.** Use this format to contact employers who have not advertised or published job openings. Research careers to find the requirements for the job you're applying for matching your qualifications with that research.
- **Referral cover letter.** Use this format if you were referred to a job opening through networking, informational interviews, or contact with employers. A referral may be to a specific job opening (advertised or unadvertised) or to an employer who may or may not be hiring now. Make sure you mention the person who referred you.
- **Job match or "T" cover letter.** Use this format to match the specific requirements of the job one-to-one with your qualifications, for example "You need 10 years' experience" and "I bring 12 years' experience." You can learn about the requirements from job ad, position descriptions, phone conversations, career research, and informational interviews.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. (2015, January 14). *How do I write a cover letter?* CareerOneStop. <https://www.careeronestop.org/JobSearch/Resumes/cover-letters.aspx>