

Cover Letters

The cover letter introduces your résumé. A cover letter, if well written, will get the employer's attention and motivate him/her to carefully read your résumé.

BASICS

- Always write to a specific individual – not Dear Sir or Madam nor To Whom It May Concern.
- Each letter must be individualized to an organization.
- Keep the letter brief – never more than one page.
- Use simple and correct grammar.
- The letter must be typed with no errors and on a good grade of bond paper.
- The letter should reflect your personality, but since it is a business letter, do not deviate too widely from conventional formats.
- Be sure to sign your letter and always include your return address.
- Proofread your letter carefully.
- Keep a copy of all your correspondence.
- Record the information on your Job Search Record. (See Page 6)

General Outline

First Paragraph: Use a POWER first sentence that summarizes your top skills and experience to grab the reader's attention. State why you are writing, name the position or type of work for which you are applying and mention how you heard of the opening or organization.

Middle Paragraph: Explain why you are interested in working for this employer and specify your reasons for desiring this type of work. If you have had relevant work experience or related education, be sure to point it out, but do not reiterate your entire résumé. Emphasize skills you have or abilities you have that relate to the job for which you are applying. Be sure to do this in a confident manner and remember that the reader will view your cover letter as an example of your writing skills.

Closing Paragraph: You may refer the reader to your enclosed résumé or whatever media you are using to illustrate your training, interests and experience. Have an appropriate closing to pave the way for the interview by indicating the action or steps you will take to initiate an interview date.

7678 Ginnings Road
Dallas, TX 76505
(214) 555-1234

Sample

June 13, 2009

Mrs. Darlene McCauley
Director of Personnel
Computer World, Inc.
155 West 9th Street
New York, NY 10011

Dear Mrs. McCauley:

Does your company need an employee with computer networking and training experience? If so, then I am the employee for your hiring needs. I am applying for the position of System Analyst at Computer World, Inc. which was advertised on the Texas Woman's University Career Services website during the week of June 12.

My Bachelor of Science degree is in Computer Science which I received from TWU in May 2009. My academic training has provided me with a strong knowledge of mainframes and microcomputers, as well as a variety of software applications. As a consultant in Texas Woman's University Computer Science Lab, I was responsible for maintaining a network of 25 computers, supervising 6 staff members and providing weekly tutorial sessions for groups of up to 18 students and faculty. In addition, I have been an avid follower of new developments in computer software. I am confident that the combination of my educational and practical training will enable me to contribute to your organization.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you personally to further discuss my background and qualifications. I will telephone you the week of June 19 to see if there is any additional information I may furnish you and to discuss a convenient time for you to meet with me personally.

Sincerely,

Juanita Ramirez
Enclosure: Résumé