

## Cover Letter Guide

A cover letter is essentially your sales pitch of yourself to the company you're applying with. The important thing to keep in mind while writing your cover letter is that you should not simply list the same information you included in your résumé in paragraph form. The goal should be to interest and endear the readers to you as a candidate by relating the skills, experience, and abilities you outline in your résumé to your specific interests and goals in pursuing the role you're applying for.

Compare your résumé and the job description closely to write about how your experiences directly correlate to the ways you would perform well in the role. The cover letter is also the perfect place to show that you've researched the company's goals and values by relating your personal interests in applying to the overall interests of the department you're applying to work in.

You should also use a cover letter to brag about yourself and the knowledge you've gained in your previous experience. Companies want to hire someone who is justifiably confident in their work, so there's no shame in being a bit braggadocio about your accomplishments.

Your cover letter should always be only one page long with 3-4 paragraphs, and should include the following components: a header, a greeting, an opening paragraph, middle paragraph(s), final paragraph, and closing signature.

Cover letters should communicate as much valid information as can fit as succinctly as possible, so paragraphs should typically be held between 3-5 sentences. Not all roles require a cover letter for application, but you should always take the opportunity to submit a cover letter if given the option.

## Cover Letter Guide

Now let's go over what exactly to include in each section of your cover letter—

- **Header** – Your header should include your name, phone number, email address, date, name of recipient, title of recipient, and company name.
- **Greeting** – Your greeting should begin as a traditional letter would with “Dear” followed by some person or entity that you know to be receiving your letter. For example, “Dear Dr. John Doe” or “Dear Marketing Department.”
- **Opening Paragraph** – In your opening paragraph you should directly identify the role you are applying for and quickly express your fundamental reason for interest as well as demonstrate excitement for the chance to apply for the position.
- **Middle Paragraph(s)** - Here you should focus on your previous experiences and how they have equipped you to be a good choice for the role you are applying to. Make sure to keep in mind the job description and only include previous experience that is relatable and relevant to the responsibilities outlined within it.
- **Final Paragraph** – The final paragraph is your opportunity to express any idiosyncrasies that are otherwise absent in your résumé but that you believe provide the hiring team a better understanding of your reasons for applying. These could include motivations, soft skills, or unique experiences that you feel could make you stand out as a candidate. You can also use this paragraph to preempt and address any gaps an interviewer might see between your résumé and the responsibilities of the job you’re applying for. If you choose to address these gaps in this section, make sure you communicate how you are actively working or plan to work on improving in that area moving forward.
- **Closing signature** – End your cover letter by briefly revisiting why you are applying for the role and why you feel you are a uniquely qualified candidate. Then, directly thank the recipients for their consideration and express that you look forward to their response.