

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A COVER LETTER

A cover letter is your introduction, your first opportunity to show a potential employer that you are the right person for the job. An employer may receive hundreds of cover letters and resumes for one job posting, so it is important to do this well.

Here are a few helpful ideas to keep in mind when writing your cover letter.

Outline: Every cover letter should have three distinct sections in its outline:

- 1) Section 1 should outline where you saw the job posting and why you are excited to be responding to it.
- 2) Section 2 should explain why you are the right candidate for the job. Describe your qualifications and how they relate to the position for which you are applying.
- 3) Section 3 should include follow up and contact information. Let them know when you will call to follow up.

Be Enthusiastic In paragraph 1, tell them that you are excited about the job. You could write something like, *“It was exciting to see you posting...”* or *“I am thrilled to be applying for a position like this...”* Make your words your own, but be sure to let them know you bring a positive attitude to the job and are very interested in finding out more information.

Reputation Also in paragraph 1, you should include a sentence that lets the employer know that you have an idea who they are and that you have done some research on their company that makes you even more excited to want to be a part of their team. As an example you could say, *“...your company is known as a progressive company with an eye to the future, and I would be delighted to be a part of helping accomplish these goals...”*

Talents In paragraph 2 of your cover letter, you need to describe your qualifications – why you are the one for this job. You can outline your skills and qualifications in sentence form, or outline them in more of a chart form using 2 columns, one with the company’s requirements on the left and your matching skills/experience on the right hand side.

Interest In your final paragraph, restate that you have a great interest in this position. *“The description of the role in your posting is exactly the type of work for which I have prepared myself, and I am greatly interested in pursuing this opportunity...”*

Connection/Contact Let them know how you can be reached, and give them an indication that you will follow up. *“I will call during the morning of the 20th in order to set up a time to meet with you at your convenience.”*

Create a different cover letter for each position you apply for!