



Career Information

Cover Letter Writing

Writing a Cover Letter

A cover letter should accompany your resume with every application you submit. A cover letter is an important marketing tool to promote your skills and abilities and capture the interest of the employer amongst the many other resumes that they receive. Having a capturing cover letter will encourage the employer to continue on to your resume and invite you for an interview. If you have about 70% of the skills asked for, then it is worth applying for the position.

An employer will be looking for:

Competence

- Demonstrated skills within the job.
- Address the selection criteria in the advertisement (eg HC license, Word Adv, good communication skills).
- Professional Documentation.

Courtesy

Write a well presented letter including correct grammar and spelling. Use common courtesies.

Self Confidence

Give them a reason to want to interview you, a “grabber” that will make them want to read more and ideally meet you. Try to be individual; you will be competing with many others for the same position.

To the Point

Be short and to the point. Keep to a maximum of one and a half pages.

Request an Interview

Request an interview at a mutually convenient time or write when is the best time to catch you. For example, if you work Monday and Tuesday, write this in the letter to increase the chances of the employer calling on Wednesday. Many times, we miss interviews because an employer will only try to catch you a maximum of three times.

The hardest part of job seeking is getting an interview, therefore the letter of application is extremely important. Do not lose sight of your objective, which is to prove to the reader that you are the best person to fill the needs of the employer. Follow up your application with a telephone call to check that they received your application. This is an opportunity for you to sell yourself. Be positive and bright on the telephone.

A cover letter should:

- Capture the employer's interest
- Show why you are writing
- Indicate how you will benefit the company
- Convince the employer to ask you for an interview.

Cover letters target your skills, highlight your selling points and answer the following questions:

Can you do the job? What are your abilities, skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications?

Will you do the job well? Are you motivated, dependable, enthusiastic?

Will you fit into the organization? Do you match the company's image, values and goals? Will you get along well with clients and co-workers?

What should a cover letter look like?

- A cover letter should be typed on computer on plain white A4 paper
- A cover letter should be in a basic font such as Arial, Bookman Old Style or Century Gothic in 11 pt or 12 pt fonts.
- Leave space around the edges and clear space between each paragraph.
- Use an A4 envelope if your cover letter and attachments don't fit a DL size envelope.
- Staple your cover letter neatly
- Don't send photocopied cover letters

Different Types of Cover Letters

- Responding to an advertisement
 - This type of cover letter should respond to the requirements set out in the advertisement. You should respond to the person stated in the advertisement and refer to the advertisement and where it was advertised in the opening paragraph.
- Cold-Call canvassing letters
 - This letter is written to show your interest in working with the company and any positions they may have vacant now or in the future. Because this letter is not in response to an advertisement, it is important that you are clear in the letter regarding the reason that you are writing. You should describe the type of position that you are looking for and also find out information about the organization so you can match your skills to this and outline them in the letter. This letter must capture the attention of the reader enough for them to contact you.
- Online letters
 - Sometimes you may need to reply via email to job advertisements on the internet or in the newspaper. There are a few things that you must consider when using this form of letter. It is usually a briefer letter which outlines two or three selling points. It can have short paragraphs or bullet style is common. The title of the position description can go in the subject line of the email. Avoid writing in all upper case in an email as this is seen as yelling. Also try to avoid using bold type or italics.

Your Name

Address

Phone

Email

{Leave two to five spaces between your address and the date, depending on the length of the letter}

Date

Contact Person's Name *{Always make sure you have the correct spelling}*

Contact Person's Position

Company Name

Company Address *{don't forget this}*

Re: Name of position or Application for ...

Dear Ms Jones, (Avoid Dear Sir/Madam)

First Paragraph

I would like to apply for the above position advertised in on (date) and **why you want that job** (i.e. why that industry and why that company, make sure this highlights how you will meet their needs, not exclusively your own.)

Second Paragraph

Outline the skills (technical and social), experience, training and achievements that are relevant to the selection criteria or the job description. These skills may have been gained through your education/course, your work experience and extra curricular activities.

Third Paragraph

Tell them why you are the best fit for the company and how your skills will meet their needs. (Tip: you could summarise the 3 best things about you that make you most competitive for the job and how these things will allow you to make an impact/get results in the role.)

Closing

Thank you for considering my application. I have enclosed a copy of my resume. I look forward to meeting you and providing further information in an interview. I can be contacted at anytime on my mobile phone number which is

Yours sincerely,

{Always leave three to five spaces between the complimentary close and your signature}

Your signature

Print Name

Writing a Covering Letter

Opening Lines

Following are some examples of opening lines to use in the first paragraph of your covering letter:

- I am writing in response to your advertisement for a Which appeared in....
- I would like to be considered for the position forwhich was advertised in
- Your advertisement for ...In today'scaught my interest because... (It is of special interest to me because...)
- I wish to submit my application for the above mentioned position, which was advertised in theon Saturday the2004.
- Your advertisement in today's paper for aappealed to me because....
- I am writing in reply to your advertisement for awhich appeared in

Middle Paragraphs

Following are some examples of opening lines to use in the Middle paragraphs of your covering letter (your sales pitch):

- I believe that my experience and accomplishments in Reflect the type of individual you are seeking and would enable me to contribute significantly to
- I would bring your organisation considerable experience for the position you describe. My most recent accomplishments include
- My hands on experience with Would stand me in good stead for the position of ...
- I am keen to work for your company because....
- Past experience in the ... field has given me the background, which would make me effective in your organisation.
- I can demonstrate my competence by
- I believe that I would be most suitable for this position as I....
- My previous skills and experience include
- I have a special interest in

Closing Lines

Following are some examples of opening lines to use in the closing paragraph of your cover letter:

- I would like to welcome the opportunity to discuss my application further and can be contacted on the above telephone number to arrange a suitable time for interview.
 - Please find enclosed resume, which supports my application. I would be pleased to attend an interview and can be contacted on the above telephone number.
 - I look forward to your response to my application and would be delighted to attend an interview at your convenience
 - For more information on how my skills and experience can be used to your organisation, please contact me so that we can arrange at time to meet.
 - I'm looking forward to meeting with you and learning more about your organisation and the challenges of the position you advertise.
-

EXAMPLE LETTER OF APPLICATION (No 1)

15 April 2005

The Office Manager
PO Box 143
SUMNER PARK QLD 4074

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Receptionist Position

I am applying for the position of receptionist, which was advertised in 'The Courier Mail' on Saturday 18 March 2006.

I have over 5 years experience working in a busy office environment as a receptionist and general office administrator. I have recently completed a Certificate III in Business Administration at Sarina Russo Schools | Australia.

In all my previous employment positions, I have been required to operate a 10 to 15 line switchboard and general commander systems. I am competent in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint and have a current typing speed of 45 words per minute with 100% accuracy.

Since beginning my working career I have gained many skills in the area of customer service and feel that I would be a valuable asset to your organisation.

I have enclosed my resume and can be contacted at anytime for an interview on 333 3333 33.

Yours faithfully

Mary Brown

EXAMPLE LETTER OF APPLICATION (No 2)

James Brown
22 Railway Parade
NORMAN PARK QLD P/CODE

16 March 2005

Employer's name
Address
TOWN/CITY STATE P/CODE

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to be considered for the position of "Digital Audio Production Assistant" as listed in "Seek.com.au" 4 March 2006.

Based on the requirements stated in the advertisement, I believe I possess a unique mix of experience and skills that would be of benefit to your area of work. The experience, skills, and abilities that I can offer the National Information Library Service include:

- Three years of working with all forms of audio production
- A strong work ethic
- The ability to work well under stress
- Experience working effectively in a multi-tasking environment.

I have enclosed a copy of my resume and can be contacted on 0439 770 972. I look forward to your favourable response.

Yours sincerely

James Brown

Encl

EXAMPLE LETTER OF APPLICATION (No 3)

Your Name
Your address
TOWN/CITY STATE P/CODE

Date

Employer's name
Address
TOWN/CITY STATE P/CODE

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss - Surname

Re: Sales Assistant Position

Please consider my application for the above position which was advertised in "The City News" on Wednesday 6 May 2006.

Currently I am in Year 11 at Rockhampton Grammar and last year completed Year 10 with above average results.

While at school I have been employed part time at Target in the Fashion Department. I enjoy sales work and have an outgoing personality suited to customer service. I design and make most of my own clothes and have been complimented for my flair for colour co-ordination.

Complete details of my education and work experience are attached along with a copy of my resume. I can be contacted after 3.00 pm daily and would be happy to attend an interview at a time convenient to you.

Yours sincerely

Your name

Enc

EXAMPLE MARKETING/CANVASSING LETTER (NO 1)

Your name
Address
CITY STATE POSTCODE

Ph no:

Date

The Employer
The Employer's Business
The Employer's Address
CITY STATE POSTCODE

Dear Mr/Mrs Last Name

I would appreciate your serious consideration for *Assistant Sales Management* position with your company.

At the present time, I hold the position of Administration Assistant to the Sales Management Team with Crest Pty Ltd, Adelaide. In this position I have clearly demonstrated an ability to negotiate contracts at the management level, exceed sales forecasts and increase market share.

This position has demanded an effective liaison with promoters and wholesalers in conjunction with the company's sales merchandising and demonstration staff.

I would be pleased to attend an interview should you be looking for someone with a successful sales support background who is enthusiastic about your product.

Thank you for considering my application. I will call you on 23 February to arrange a mutually agreeable meeting time.

Yours sincerely

Your name

EXAMPLE MARKETING/CANVASSING LETTER (NO 2)

Your name
Address
CITY STATE POSTCODE

Ph no:

Date

The Employer
The Employer's Business
The Employer's Address
CITY STATE POSTCODE

Dear Mr/Mrs Last Name

I am eager to pursue a career in Bookkeeping/Junior Accounting and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my experience and qualifications with you.

You will notice on the enclosed resume that I have previous business experience as an Office Junior.

I am currently enrolled in a Certificate III Business Studies course with Sarina Russo Schools | Australia, which covers bookkeeping and electronic accounting packages.

I believe the combination of my business experience, bookkeeping skills and ongoing interest in accounting would be valuable to your company.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Your name

Enc