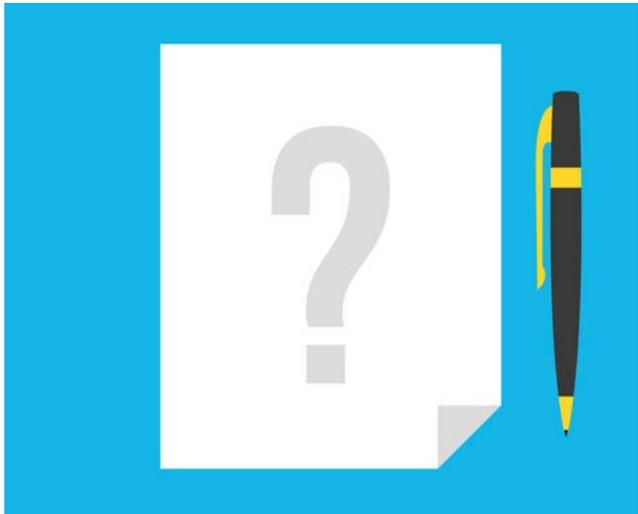


How to Write a Cover Letter.



Accessful
The right start unlocks success

Resources for
Students



Do I need a cover letter?

Your cover letter might just be the reason a manager decides to look at your résumé and ignore someone else's! So, the short answer is—yes—you do need one!

Writing a good cover letter deserves your time and effort. If you do your research and make sure your letter is free of spelling, grammar or typing errors, you'll have a better chance getting your application noticed.

How do you get started?

It's important to understand a cover letter provides extra information about you, not just a repeat of what's already on your résumé. It's your first chance to make a great impression on a potential employer and it helps you stand out as the best person applying for the job.

Doing a little research about the company will help you write a short sentence showing you've taken the time to learn about the job.

There are different types of cover letters.

Application letters are used when there is a job posted looking for help. Use this type of cover letter if the company states they are hiring.

Prospecting or Inquiry letters are used when someone is looking to see if there might be a job or position available.

What makes a good cover letter?

- It's short and has only a few paragraphs
- Explains the reasons why you are interested in the company or job
- Is customized for the position and addressed to a specific person
- Explains how you learned about the job
- Highlights the most relevant skills or experience you have
- Is easy to read by using spaces between the greeting, paragraphs and your signature
- States how you will follow up in your closing sentence
- Includes your contact information
- Is free of spelling or grammar errors

What NOT to include.

- ‘To Whom It May Concern’ in salutation
- Any personal information about you or your family
- Questions about salary, days-off, discounts, etc.
- If you left your last job, especially if you were fired
- Spelling or grammar mistakes



How to format your letter.

Header

Start your letter with the contact information for you and your employer (name, address, phone number, email) followed by the date.

First and Last Name
Street Address
City, Province, Postal Code
Phone
Email

Salutation

Begin with ‘Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name’ followed by the use of a comma. If you are unsure about the gender identity, you can write out their full name. If you don’t know the employer’s name, simply write, ‘Dear Hiring Manager.’ This is better than using ‘To Whom It My Concern.’

Introduction

Start by stating you are applying for a specific job. Explain how you heard about the opportunity, especially if you know someone who already works with this company. Briefly state how your skills and experience are a good match for the job or company.

Your main goal is to get their attention with a good opening sentence. Here are some examples:

A direct opening:

“I am interested in the grocery clerk position at ABC Grocery store.”

Mention a contact name:

“Jane Doe suggested I contact you about the job because she knows my skills would be a good match for this position.”

State an accomplishment:

“As the leader of our school’s recycling team, I improved our standing as an Eco-School.”

Show enthusiasm:

“I would greatly appreciate a chance to meet with you to share what I can bring to your team at ABC company.”

Body

In 1 or 2 paragraphs, explain why you are interested in the job and what makes you a great candidate. Be sure to mention any specific skills that are highlighted in the job posting and connect them to your experience. Do not simply repeat the skills mentioned on your résumé. Rather, provide a brief but specific example to show your abilities.

Closing

Restate how your skills make you an ideal fit for the job or company. If you have still room in your letter, you can also explain why you would like to work at the specific company. Remember, your cover letter should be short and be kept to one page.

State you would like the chance to interview or discuss any employment opportunity. Explain what you will do to follow-up (e.g. you will call in a week or email the hiring manager?)

Thank the employer for their attention and consideration.

Signature

Use a complimentary closing such as:

- Best regards,
- Respectfully yours,
- Sincerely,
- Yours truly,
- With sincere thanks,
- Cordially yours,

End your cover letter with your handwritten signature in the space below the complimentary closing. Your typed name appears below your signature.



Joseph Applicant

Edit and Proofread

Make sure you edit and proof your cover letter before sending it to an employer. It is often helpful to ask another adult or teacher to look at your letter to catch anything you may have missed. A second set of eyes is always better - it is easy to miss catching a mistake when you have read your work over so many times.

Print your letter out and read it aloud. This is almost always the best way to catch small typos, missing words or odd sounding sentences. Take advantage of using any special software on your computer for reading and writing tasks.

Once you have double-checked your cover letter, you're ready to send it out with your resume!



Sample Application Letter

Joseph Applicant

123 Main Street, Anytown, ON A1B 2C3 · 555-212-1234 · joseph.applicant@email.com

September 1, 2018

Jane Smith
Store Manager, Zehrs
123 Business Rd.
Business City, ON B2C 3D4

Dear Ms. Smith,

I'm writing to inquire whether you have any positions open at your store. I have strong communication skills, can follow directions quickly and I'm very good at responding to urgent needs. During our school's book fair, I helped promote sales with customers and quickly noticed when supplies were running out. I was flexible during busy times and changed roles when directed by the supervising teacher.

I have seen first-hand the difference our school's breakfast program makes because of the community grants from Zehrs and I am interested in working for a company that cares about the community it serves. Giving back to the community is very important to me, as you will notice with my co-op and volunteer experience with the Humane Society and the YMCA. In both roles, I was responsible for maintaining supplies and using my strong customer service skills.

My resume is enclosed with this letter so you can review my experience and achievements. I would appreciate an opportunity to talk with you to see how my skills could benefit your company. I know my ability to complete tasks in a responsible and efficient manner will be of benefit to your store's team. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you soon. I will call to next week to see if there is a time to meet.

Sincerely,



Joseph Applicant

Sample Inquiry Letter

Joseph Inquiry

123 Main Street, Anytown, ON A1B 2C3 · 555-212-1234 · joseph.inquiry@email.com

September 1, 2018

Jane Smith
Store Manager, Zehrs
123 Business Rd.
Business City, ON B2C 3D4

Dear Ms. Smith,

I'm writing to apply for the clerk position posted on the Zehrsjob.ca website. My aunt, Jane Doe, currently works as the Deli Manager and suggested I apply given my I strong communication skills, ability to follow directions and respond quickly to urgent needs. During my job at Willie's Warehouse, I was responsible for numerous tasks including preparing products for packaging and shipping, and safely operating machinery in the loading area.

I am interested in working for a company that cares about the community it serves. Giving back to the community is very important to me, as you will notice with my volunteer experience working for Habitat for Humanity. In this role, I was responsible for maintaining store supplies and assisting customers.

I know my ability to complete tasks in a responsible and efficient manner will be of benefit to your store's team. Thank you for your time and consideration. I've included my resume, and you can contact me by email (joseph.inquiry@email.com) or by cell phone (555-212-1234). I look forward to speaking with you about this exciting opportunity.

Sincerely,



Joseph Inquiry