

Cover letters can be the deciding factor between getting called for an interview or being passed up for another candidate who submitted something better. To make sure *your* cover letter helps *you* land the interview, keep these do's and don'ts in mind when you're writing:

- **Do** create a personalized cover letter for every company and position.
- **Do** take the time to find out the hiring manager's name and open the letter with a proper greeting.
- **Do** identify the position you're applying for, including the job code or reference number (if there is one).
- **Do** maintain a confident, enthusiastic tone.
- **Do** proofread repeatedly (typos and grammatical mistakes are a huge turn-off)!
- **Do** ask someone you trust to critique and proofread your cover letter.
- **Do** end with a statement of intent (ex: I will be in touch on Tuesday to discuss the possibility of an interview).
  
- **Don't** go beyond one page. In most cases, three or four paragraphs are enough to tell your story.
- **Don't** try to be cute. Humor is subjective; it can make you seem unprofessional rather than personable.
- **Don't** resort to clichés, exaggerations, or false flattery.
- **Don't** assume spell check will catch all errors!
- **Don't** simply repeat claims you made in your resume. Instead, highlight the most impressive accomplishments from your resume and describe the story behind them.
- **Don't** forget to change the recipient's name and company name for each cover letter you write!

**5** things  
I wish I knew  
before:

Writing my



# COVER LETTER

A cover letter is still a letter

**1**

Address at the top right-hand corner, then the recipient's details, then the date. The text should be justified.



**2**

Speak the company language



Search the company online and gauge their voice and tone. List out important keywords and use them on your letter.

**3**

Skip the familiar tunes

Your letter is about YOU, so avoid using any passe-partout sentences from a random or non-existent person's cover letter you found online.



Don't echo your CV

**4**

Your cover letter should be short, and only say what is necessary. It should not list information that belongs on a CV.



Tailor your letter to the job

**5**

Always make the necessary adjustments, so that your cover letter emphasizes the information about you that is most relevant to the job.



**Extra tip!**

It is generally best to find the name of the person you are writing to, and to sign off with "Yours sincerely".



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Before beginning your own cover letter, it would be wise to do a simple Google search for cover letter examples and find one that you think would work best for you, your skills, and your field of interest. It can help to work from a template but make sure it is still formal and you are able to personalize it as need be. If you are looking for a general format to follow, please see the image below - it does an excellent job of providing a "jumping off point" for what each paragraph should include.

- 1** **YOUR NAME** 555-212-8533  
your-email@gmail.com
- 2** Dear **[Recruiter/Hiring Manager's Name]**,
- 3** **INTRO PARAGRAPH:**  
Grab the reader's attention right away with a **unique opening line**. In a few sentences, describe what role you're applying for, why you're interested in the job (**and the company itself**), and what makes you a good fit.
- 4** **BODY PARAGRAPH(S):**  
**List the responsibilities of your position, projects you participated in, skills you acquired,** and above all, the **impact that you had**. Feel free to include any accomplishments or awards you received.
- 5** **CLOSING PARAGRAPH:**  
**Re-emphasize why you're interested in the position, why you're passionate about the company, and why you'd make a good fit.** In addition, describe how you, if hired, would contribute to the company.  
**CALL-TO-ACTION:**  
Prompt the reader to move forward with your application by inviting them to follow up with you, and thank them for reviewing your cover letter.
- 6** Sincerely,  
[Your name]