



RESEARCH THE EMPLOYER & THE POSITION

- Tailor your cover letter to each specific position by researching the company and tying your skills/qualifications to that position. Do not submit the same cover letter for multiple positions.
- Use LinkedIn, social media and the organization's website to gather information for your cover letter.
- Try to find the name of the person who will read the letter, which could be listed in the position description. If you can't find a name use a title (ex: Internship Coordinator, Human Resources Director, etc.)
- Highlight the verbs in the job description to identify key skills needed for the position and reference those key skills from the job description and draw connections to your credentials.

TYPOS, GRAMMAR, & STYLE

- Cover letters showcase your writing ability, so make sure they are error-free and grammatically correct.
- Avoid beginning every sentence with an "I" statement.
- Remember that this is a marketing tool:
 - Use positive and confident language, but not too imposing.
 - Try to be concise with supporting detail.
 - Write utilizing strong action verbs.
- Keep letters concise and factual, no more than a single page. Avoid flowery language.

FONT & LAYOUT

- Cover letters should be no more than one-page; be short and to the point, about 250 – 300 words total.
- The top identifying information on your cover letter should match your resume (name, address, email, phone number, etc.). Use the same style/formatting as on your resume.
- Use 11 – 12 point font, in the same font as your resume. Use one-inch margins.
- Justify your content to the LEFT and do not indent your paragraphs.
- Convert cover letter to a .pdf before uploading/emailing and check that your formatting translates correctly.

ATTACHING COVER LETTERS & RESUMES IN AN E-MAIL

- Use a simple, informative subject line: *Assistant General Manager position*
- Convert Microsoft Word docs to .pdf and name your resume and cover letter so they are easily associated with you. For example: *JaneAusten_Resume.pdf* and *JaneAusten_CoverLetter.pdf*.
- **If the employer does not specify that you send a cover letter:**
 - Copy & paste your cover letter into the body of an email (minus the date & employer contact info). This allows a hiring manager to view it immediately without downloading an attachment.
 - Check that your email displays properly since copying/pasting content can skew email formatting.
 - Use the default font and styling of your email program (Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial, etc.).
- **If the employer specifies you submit your resume and cover letter via email attachment:**
 - Attach resume and cover letter in separate documents; convert Microsoft Word docs to .pdf docs.
 - In your email message, briefly say why you are writing (see below example).

Dear Mr. Darcy:

I am applying for the position of Recreation Coordinator, which I saw posted recently on Idealist.org. I am excited about this opportunity and believe I am an excellent candidate for the position. I have attached my cover letter and resume; I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you this position and my qualifications further. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Jane Austen

What Employers Want to Hear COVER LETTER CONTENT

Suzy E. Quinn

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(Leave a space here of 1 - 4 blank lines, depending on length of letter and how much "white space" you have left)

Name of Recipient

Title of Recipient

Organization

Street Address

City, State zip code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name of Recipient (if name is unknown, job title of person most likely to receive documents):

PARAGRAPH 1:

Name the position for which you are applying and state why you're interested in this position and employer – what in the position description gets you excited about the opportunity? The main purpose of the first paragraph is to explain why you are interested in this position and employer, and to grab the reader's attention. Offer at least one sincere compliment (from your company research) about what the organization is doing well that has motivated you to apply to work for them.

PARAGRAPH 2:

Indicate what you can do for the employer based on his/her needs. What 2-3 experiences connect your skills to those listed in the position description and what makes you a good fit? Describe your qualifications for the position using specific examples from academic, work, volunteer, leadership, athletics, and student organization experiences. Connect your accomplishments, skills and knowledge directly to the position and employer. Put yourself in the reader's shoes: what can you write that will convince the reader that you are ready and able to do the job? Focus on key areas of your background and do not simply regurgitate information from your resume.

PARAGRAPH 3:

Refer the reader to an enclosed resume or application and summarize your interest/qualifications in one statement. Give a final statement of your interest and qualifications. Thank the employer for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Leave a space here of 4 blank lines)

Cursive Signature here or Typed Name Here

(Only sign the letter if mailing or handing your CL/resume directly to someone in person. If emailing or uploading to a website, then type your name.)