



Cover Letter Guide

Your Present Address
City, State Zip Code

Date

Person's Name
Person's Title
Company Name
Company Address
Company City, State Zip Code

If you aren't sure who to address the cover letter to, start with the name of the company

Dear Ms. Jones: [or "Hiring Specialist" if name is not known]

FIRST SECTION:

Attract the employer's attention by briefly touching on your specific interest in the company and/or position. If you have been referred by someone, mention it here. Avoid stereotypical, overused first sentences such as "This is in answer to your advertisement," or "I am a senior in Psychology at Penn State." Use this paragraph to convince the reader that you are interested by specifically outlining why you want to work for them and how you would contribute to the organization. The last sentence in this paragraph is a summary of the specific skills and abilities that make you qualified for the position (check the job description; the skills sought are listed here).

MIDDLE SECTION(S):

The middle section (typically two paragraphs) will expand on the last sentence in the first paragraph which summarized your skills and abilities. Lead with your most industry-specific skills and experiences in the first paragraph. For instance, if you completed an internship or participated in a relevant project you would describe it here. Avoid simply listing the same information that exists in your resume. You want to tell a story about how you cultivated the relevant skills needed to succeed in this position.

In the next paragraph, describe additional skills and experiences that make you a well-rounded employee. These skills are typically known as transferrable skills, such as time management or interpersonal skills. Be sure to detail not only how you obtained or practiced these skills, but also how they will be beneficial in the role that you are applying for.

CLOSING SECTION:

Restate your interest in the position. Request an interview to further discuss the position and your qualifications. Express appreciation for being considered and provide your contact information (i.e. your phone number and email address).

Sincerely,
Your typed name