

COVER LETTER

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

CREATED BY ANTONY CARUSO USING HALTON INDUSTRY EDUCATION COUNCIL'S RESOURCE 'RESUME AND COVER LETTER GUIDE'



A cover letter is a letter that is attached to your resume when applying for a position.

It is a way to sell yourself and set yourself apart from the other candidates.

The Cover Letter is Made Up of Three Main Paragraphs

First Paragraph

- State the reason for your letter and the position you are applying for
- Explain how and/or where you heard about it the position
- Write about your interest in the position

Second Paragraph

- Should answer the question "Why should I hire you?"
- Highlight the most important relevant skills, abilities, knowledge, experience or training that are applicable to the position
- Include some of your research about the company or organization

Third Paragraph

- Thank the employer for their time and consideration
- Request an interview or state that you look forward to hearing from them

Some Guidelines on Writing a Cover Letter



- keep your cover letter to a maximum of one page;
- ALWAYS include a Cover Letter with your resume;
- personalize your letter to a specific person, using the correct spelling of their name;
- customize the letter to match the requirements of the position and your skills;
- explain how you will add value to the company;
- make sure there are no spelling nor grammar errors;
- use an easy to read type of font (e.g. Arial, Helvetica, Palatino, Times, etc.);
- your font should be no smaller than 12 point so that it is easy to read

An Outline for a Cover Letter

Date

Contact name

Job title

Company name

Address

Dear Ms./Mrs./Mr. Employer:

(Be sure to determine the formal designation (Ms./Mrs./Mr.) of the person you are contacting. If you're not sure, call the organization to confirm.)

Paragraph 1 – Introduction

Use this paragraph to introduce yourself and to get the attention of the employer. Be professional and polite in language and tone. Mention the position you are applying for, why you are applying for the job, and how you found out about it. Show interest in the organization, and explain why you would like to be part of it.

Paragraph 2 and 3 – Description

This is the main body of your letter, which is usually one or two paragraphs long. Explain your qualifications and why you should be considered for the position. Don't just repeat what you put in your résumé; give specific examples and explain how your skills will help you in the position you're applying for. This part of the letter is meant to convince the employer that you would be a valuable addition to the team.

Paragraph 4 – Closing

It's important to end your letter in a polite way. Restate your desire to be part of the organization, and politely request an interview. End with an action statement, informing the employer about when you plan to contact him or her to follow up on your application. It's important to follow instructions, so if the job advertisement says not to call or e-mail, respect their wishes.

Thank you, /Yours sincerely, /Yours truly, etc.

[sign your name]

Your name

Attach (your résumé)

A Sample of a Cover Letter

November 19, 2012

Ms. Jamie Hopkins
Store Manager
Finner's Coffee & Tea
607 Youngman Road
Ottawa, Ontario
N1G 7K4

Dear Ms. Hopkins:

As a regular customer at Finner's, I am always impressed with the quality of customer service I receive. When visiting the Youngman Road location recently, I learned that a part-time cashier position is currently available. Although I am a student, I have a flexible schedule and am available to work 18 to 25 hours a week. I believe that my previous customer service experience, my excellent work ethic, and my love for coffee will make me a great member of the Finner's team.

As you will see from the attached résumé, I have four years of customer service experience, with three of those years relating specifically to the food-and-beverage industry. During these years, I developed a passion for coffee and a rich knowledge of coffee and espresso products. With years of experience preparing coffee and espresso beverages, I am extremely competent and self-sufficient when producing high-quality coffee products. With this comprehensive base of product knowledge combined with my superior customer service skills, I know that I would be a beneficial addition to the Finner's staff.

I have consistently maintained a professional and kind behaviour when dealing with customers. In my previous position, I received many customer compliments about my prompt and friendly service. I also received a staff award, presented to me by my regional manager, for my calm problem-solving in periods of high customer volume and stress.

Thank you for taking the time to review my résumé. I look forward to speaking with you soon about how I can contribute to the positive and exciting environment at Finner's. I will contact you next Wednesday, November 28, after 3:00 p.m. If you need to reach me in the meantime, feel free to call me any time of day on my cell phone at 613-555-4545.

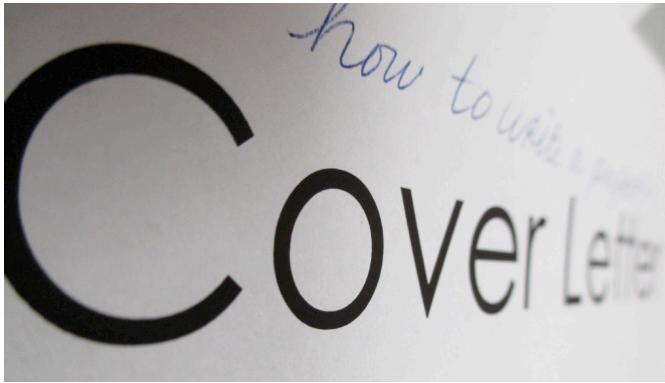
Yours sincerely,

Michelle Scott

Attached (résumé)

A Cover Letter That Doesn't Bore the Reader

by Marisa Baratta, TalentEgg.ca student contributor, March 19, 2010



Recently I attended my fourth interview in two weeks and my potential employer told me something I had never been told before: "I'm impressed by your cover letter."

I was surprised and flattered. "I hate writing those," I said. I wondered what my cover letter had that others didn't. "Was it...detailed?" I guessed.

"You tell a personal story," she corrected. She referred to the introductory paragraph, in which I reminded her that I'd met her at a publishing event several months before. I wrote that I'd heard her boss is extremely nice and was teaching my friend.

I ended my introduction paragraph with a personal story about how much I love the outdoors and related it to her magazine.

Introductory paragraph

If you know the person you're writing to, now is the time to remind them of how you met them (you attended one of their lectures, you've seen their work).

The next sentence (or first sentence, if you haven't met the person you're writing to) should indicate the position you're applying for.

"It's difficult to figure out what people want if they have a variety of experiences," says a student in the human resources program at Sheridan College. You can also add how you heard about this job (an ad online, a poster at school). It's especially helpful to throw in someone's name here - someone who is in the industry and recommended you for the position.

You should also explain your availability. Conclude the paragraph with a statement that shows you know the company well and have a personal interest in their work or subject.

Another example: When I applied to work at a daycare, I began my cover letter by writing that while waiting outside for my ride in high school, I remembered seeing the little kids from the daycare go on walks with the staff, and how I'd

hoped to one day work at that daycare with those children. This story showed my employer that I wasn't after a job because it was a job, but because I loved the children and cared about the work. It showed dedication, feeling, and it made the letter personal.

Remember that the person reading your cover letter is susceptible to the same weaknesses as you, and interested in the same things that you are: He or she enjoys a good story and gets tired of reading a pile of cover letters. Once you've attracted your reader's attention with your personal story, and clearly indicated the job you're searching for, you can jump into the selling part.

Body paragraphs

This is where you can add detail on the work you've covered on your résumé. You want to discuss only those experiences that relate to this job - for instance, not to magazine editing jobs in general, but editing this magazine in particular.

- If you're applying for to a pet magazine, elaborate on your work with animals and how much you love your pets

- If you're applying for a web position with a wedding magazine, omit the paragraph where you talk about animals and elaborate instead on your online experience

- Use phrases such as, "this is why I would fit with your company" or "these activities have prepared me to work with your business"

- Show your potential employer that you have performed similar work before, that you have the skills, and that they can benefit from what you can offer

The woman who interviewed me manages the websites of several outdoor magazines. She told me she had received many cover letters and reading them had worn her out, I could tell.

Finding a good cover letter makes the person hiring you feel interested and grateful for something that breaks the boredom. She told me she'd read entire pages of cover letters, only to read the last paragraph and think, "You've told me nothing!" Your cover letter should not exceed one page and it should be as clear and concise as possible.

The conclusion

Your reader has heard all he or she needs to know, so make it short. Tell the employer you look forward to hearing back from them. Welcome them to contact you via e-mail or phone, and thank them for considering you. Hopefully you'll soon be thanking them for the job!