

WHAT is a Cover Letter and WHY do I need one?

The Cover Letter is an essential part of the job search process and should be included with every resume and/or job application that you send out, even when it is not requested. It is a self-marketing tool that serves as your introduction to a prospective employer. It provides you the opportunity to expand upon the material included in your resume. A good cover letter will win the interest of an employer by highlighting your qualifications and skills related to the position you seek. The goal of a cover letter is to help you secure an interview by communicating your potential value to the organization.



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Questions to Guide the Development of YOUR Cover Letter:

Your cover letter should include information about YOUR answers to these five questions:

1. If hired, how will YOU benefit the organization?
2. What value will YOU bring to the organization?
3. What are your greatest ACHIEVEMENTS relevant to the position and organization?
4. How do your SKILLS and QUALIFICATIONS relate to the position?
5. What EDUCATION and professional CREDENTIALS qualify you for this position?

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Tips to Remember When Preparing to Write YOUR Cover Letter:

- 👉 Many human resource departments/personnel offices have job announcements and/or full job descriptions available that applicants can request. It is then easier to match job requirements with your qualifications.
- 👉 Research the company and the position before applying. This will help you get contact name(s), identify the needs and expectations of the company, and understand how your skills and experience are a good “fit” for the company.
- 👉 Employers use salary to screen applicants out before they even have the opportunity to discuss their qualifications. Therefore, it is never to your advantage to discuss salary in a cover letter, even when it’s asked for.
- 👉 A cover letter has an average life expectancy of about eight seconds. It must quickly and clearly point out your knowledge, skills, and experience related to the position to persuade the reader to continue on to your resume.