

## Cover Letter Accompanying a Resume or Application

NEVER, EVER  
PHOTOCOPY  
YOUR LETTER!

Current Date

Your Street Address

Your City, State, and Zip Code

(It is also acceptable to have this as a header on your document)

Name of Person

Title or Position

Name of Company

Street Address

City, State and Zip Code

ADDRESS YOUR  
LETTER TO A  
SPECIFIC PERSON  
WHENEVER  
POSSIBLE

Dear (Use a formal greeting, i.e. "Mr. Jones" or "Ms. Smith"):

**FIRST PARAGRAPH** - Tell why you are writing, name the position for which you are applying, and tell how you heard of the opening. For example, you may begin with a name introduction (if someone your reader knows suggested the position, mention the name).

MARGINS SHOULD  
BE EVEN AND THE  
LETTER SHOULD BE  
CENTERED FROM  
TOP TO BOTTOM

**SECOND PARAGRAPH** - State why you are interested in working for this employer, and specify your interest in this type of work. If you have had experience, be sure to point out what particular achievements you have accomplished, and their importance to this type of work. Point out areas of unique "fit" between your skills and the company and position. This is likely to be the longest paragraph of your letter. You should not simply restate what's on your resume, but expand on your qualifications.

**THIRD PARAGRAPH** - Having created a desire to know more about you, it is time to close the letter by asking for a course of action. Your request should be specific and positive and ask for action. Ask for an application blank, suggest a day or week when you will be available for an interview, or offer some similar incentive for an immediate and favorable reply. (Keep in mind that you should follow up with a phone call a few days after you have sent your resume and cover letter.)

ALWAYS SIGN  
YOUR LETTER

Sincerely,

*Your Original Signature*

Your Name (Typewritten)

IF A RESUME OR  
OTHER ENCLOSURE  
IS SENT ALSO,  
NOTE IT IN THE  
LETTER

Enclosure

NOTE: IF SENDING  
YOUR LETTER VIA  
EMAIL:

The email header takes the place of the addresses and date shown above. Use a professional subject line. The text of the letter would be the same. Your signature would simply be typewritten. The word "enclosure" would be eliminated, because your resume would be an attachment.



# Key Points to Remember about Your Cover Letter

1. Your cover letter is PERSONAL, but NOT UNPROFESSIONAL. It gives insight into you, your motivations, and your personality. It helps the employer know you and determine if you would be a good fit with their organization.
2. Follow standard business letter format when presenting your cover letter on paper. Make sure your name and contact information are on the cover letter. You may use your resume “heading” as stationery for your cover letter if you desire.
3. Address your cover letter to real person whenever possible. It may take some effort to find out who that real person is, but if you can, the employer will be impressed with your initiative. Donald Asher, a nationally known career expert, says that in his opinion it’s better to address a cover letter to the wrong person than to “Dear Personnel Manager”.
4. A cover letter should never appear to be a form letter. Employers do not want to feel that you sent the exact same cover letter to every employer. They want a sense that you know their organization and want the specific job they are offering, not just any job anywhere.
5. Tailor your cover letter for every organization. Your key points may be relatively unchanged, but do enough research that you can say something specific and unique in each letter. Do your homework! Don’t send your cover letter until you have spent at least 10 minutes browsing the company’s website.
6. Remember that you can introduce new information in the cover letter. In fact, some information is better said in the cover letter – things like your motivations, passion, and enthusiasm for the company or job are hard to convey in a resume, yet they are important to an employer when considering whether or not to interview you.
7. On the flip side, remember that a resume and cover letter are often separated once they reach the employer, so don’t put important skills or qualifications ONLY in your cover letter.
8. Make sure that you do not simply restate what’s on your resume. Instead, draw conclusions from what your resume shows, and point out areas of unique “fit” between you and your background and the company and position.
9. Every time you contact a company, send a new cover letter. For example, when you send in the application, send a cover letter too. When you provide requested portfolio items, send a cover letter. Each letter can build on the information in the initial cover letter. It is your goal to stand out from the other candidates. This is one way to do that.
10. Make sure your cover letter bears an original signature if it is submitted on paper.

John K. Smith  
5555 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. N.  
St. Paul, MN 55555  
555.421.6589  
[jksmith@students.nwc.edu](mailto:jksmith@students.nwc.edu)

Human Resources  
ABC Company  
555 7<sup>th</sup> St. N.  
Suite 5000  
Minneapolis, MN 55412

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing in response to the advertisement on your website for an experienced Help Desk Engineer Level 1 (job code requisition number 2980). After reading your job description, I am confident that my skills and my enthusiasm for supporting coworkers with their computer needs is a perfect match for what you are looking for.

My attached resume will provide you with a general outline of my previous work experience and more specific achievements. I have taken the time to list your current requirements and my applicable skills in those areas. I hope this will help you use your time effectively today.

**Your Requirements:**

Knowledge of Microsoft Office/Windows Products

*User trouble-call resolution techniques*

Excellent communication capability

*Able to work from procedures using systems or application manuals*

Independently establish clear priorities and manage multiple demands

*Proven technical ability*

Chinese language knowledge

**My Skills:**

5+ years working with Microsoft Windows, Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Outlook

*Several years taking calls from users and inventorying them in Track-it! Database*

Extensive experience in communicating both written and orally

*Have used manuals to figure things out my entire life*

Able to organize and prioritize working on many projects at a time

*5+ years working in technical environments*

*helping where needed*

Spent 6 months in Wuhan, China studying

Mandarin and culture

I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this position with you. If you have questions or would like to schedule an interview, please contact me by phone or by email. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,  
John K. Smith

**(Example of "T" Cover Letter in response to specific job posting)**