

# COVER LETTERS

(Also called: letters of application, intent, or interest)

## BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR WRITING COVER LETTERS

- Address the letter to a real person, do your best to find the name of the person you are writing to.
- Show some enthusiasm about the position and company.
- Research the employer. Write something that indicates that you know about the company.
- If you have a job description, show that you match that description.
- Briefly explain why (knowledge, skills and experience) you are the right person for the organization and position (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph).
- Highlight one or two of your most significant accomplishments or abilities relevant to the position (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph).
- Be positive and confident in tone, content, and expectations. Write in an active voice.
- Check the spelling and grammar, and have others read the letter.
- Vary your sentence structure. (Don't start every sentence with "I".)

## TO HELP YOU GET STARTED

Below are some opening lines to help you give you some direction and ideas to start putting your cover letter together. Remember that although some of these ideas may sound great, you are the one who needs to decide how best to present yourself-not only professionally but by writing a letter with which you are comfortable and that accurately represents you.

### *First Paragraph*

- It was encouraging to see the ..... position posted on your web site because I am confident that my skills and experience fit what you are seeking.
- Rachel Hamilton, your Marketing Director, suggested that I contact you regarding...
- I am applying for the... position at...because...
- My professor, Dr. Jim Nichols, informed me about the opening ...

### *Second Paragraph*

- My qualifications and experience include...
- In May I will graduate from Crown College with a degree in...
- Your company interests me because...
- The experience I have gained in the accounting field...
- I have worked at developing the skills...by
- My record includes many accomplishments including...
- I have specialized or focused on...
- Your company's efforts to .... have attracted me because...-

### *Closing Paragraph*

- Thank you for considering me for this opportunity.
- I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss how I can contribute, or serve...
- I look forward to interviewing for this opportunity.
- During the week of ... I will be in Chicago and would be available to meet with you.
- Next week I will call you to discuss how my skills and experience can benefit your organization...

## Sample Cover Letter Format

(You can use the heading for your resume as a header for this letter. Copy and paste it here.)

Date

Person's Name

Title

Company

Address

Dear Name or Title:

### **First Paragraph:**

Get their attention and show your interest! State the **reason** for writing. Name the specific position you are applying for and tell them how and where you learned about the opening.

### **Middle Paragraph(s):**

Describe your interest in the position, in the field or work, or in the organization, and what you will bring to the company. Mention something about the company to show that you have done research on them. If you have work experience, be sure to mention accomplishments or achievements. Show that you have specific education, qualifications, or skills for this job. Refer to key aspects of your resume that relate to the job or employer, but don't restate complete sections of the resume. You want to show them that you **fit** what they want.

### **Closing Paragraph:**

The final paragraph of your cover letter must be **proactive**, not passive. You can ask for an interview (or a meeting) in this paragraph. Express confidence that you fit the job. You can/should also tell the employer that you plan to follow-up within a specified time.

Sincerely,

(signature)

Your typed name

Enclosure/s