

Cover Letter Tips

Cover letters allow you an opportunity to use the narrative form to describe yourself and your achievements. The cover letter is often used to arouse the interest of the employer, so do not use a passive voice when writing. You want the employer to perceive you as a competent, energetic and organized worker- use your cover letter to display these qualities. Action words are often used to portray the characteristics that employers are looking for; some popular examples of power words and phrases include:

Enthusiastic
Energetic
Decisive
Reliable
Independent
Results-oriented
Ambitious

Sincere
Persuasive
Tenacious
Responsible
Determined
Creative
Willing to accept change

There are many words which give the employer an impression of the work you have done. Find words that apply to you and your experience. Give the impression that your achievement and personality are a dynamic combination- you are an individual and you want the company to know it!

Formatting your cover letter

Too many people send out resumes and cover letters with spelling mistakes in them; be sure to check spelling, grammar and punctuation.

The general format for a cover letter is four paragraphs.

- The first paragraph should be short and should outline the position that you are applying for and what prompted you to write the employer.
- The second paragraph should concentrate on your 'soft skills' or those that have been acquired through indirect experience or would be considered personality traits.
- The third paragraph highlights more concrete accomplishments, both educational and work related- don't be afraid to sell your accomplishments.
- The fourth paragraph includes your request for an interview and your particular interest in the company.

Make certain to include your telephone number, e-mail address and any other mode of communication you prefer. It is all right to state a preference, particularly if you know that you do not regularly check your e-mail or are not usually close to a telephone.