

Writing a cover letter Do's and Don'ts

How to write a cover letter

A cover letter is a short and specific letter that should always accompany your resume.

You might be applying for a specific advertised job or you might be marketing yourself for possible future work. Either way, your cover letter aims to:

- Introduce you
- Highlight your key selling points (skills, experience or achievements)
- Encourage the reader to discover more about you through your resume
- Finish with a 'call to action', e.g. requesting an interview (if it's a specific job) or meeting (to discuss more general work prospects)

Make cover letter job specific

The key aim with any cover letter is to make it as *personal* as possible. This means addressing your letter to a real person (not 'To Whom It May Concern') and a specific job. Avoid the temptation to send out a generic, 'one-size-fits-all' letter as a specific cover letter shows that you have taken the time to research a little bit about the company that you are applying for.

This means a bit of extra work. You may need to call an organisation and find out how you need to address your letter. Spend some time researching a company (using the internet is often the easiest way to do this) so that you can make your letter *relevant* to a specific job or a particular company.

What to include in a cover letter

You need to demonstrate to a potential employer that you understand the job requirements and can do the job. So include the skills and experiences you have that match the job description.

You also need to show that you are enthusiastic and have a positive attitude towards the role and the hiring company.

Note: See over for an example of a covering letter.

Covering Letter Example

Your name
Your address

Date

Name of person you are applying to or The Manager
Company Name
Company Address

Dear Sir/Madam, (or full name if you have it)

My name is _____ and I am currently a year ____ student at Elanora State High School and would like to be given the opportunity of working as a School-based Trainee with your company.

Write in here some of your personal qualities
Eg; Friendly, outgoing, work hard, willingness to learn, etc.

Write in here any work experience you have done
Both paid and unpaid positions.

I hope that the information I have supplied is sufficient however if you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

I have also enclosed a copy of my resume for your perusal. I appreciate your time in considering my application and hope to hear from you in the near future. I can be contacted on 0400 000 000 to arrange a suitable time for an interview.

Yours faithfully, (if name not known)

Sign here

Your name