

# Cover Letters

## Why should I use a Cover Letter?

1. It serves as an introduction to your resume, as well, as an inquiry to a position.
2. Allows employers to visualize you as a person and speak for you in your absence
3. Directly matches your skills and experiences to the qualifications of the position you are seeking.
4. It expresses your personality, enthusiasm, or interest in a specific opportunity or job opening.

Ultimately, a well written cover letter serves as another opportunity to communicate you are qualified!

### COVER LETTER TIPS

#### TIP #1

- Avoid restating what is on your resume.

#### TIP #2

- Match your experience to the job requirements.

#### TIP #3

- Express desire and passion for the opportunity you are seeking.

#### TIP #4

- Edit to ensure there are no errors.

## Three Types of Cover Letters

### Referral

A product of networking; contacting companies with known or unknown openings, with the letter being tied to the name of a person the employer knows.

### Cold contact

Contacting companies in the field you are interested in working without a known position opening.

### Invited

Responding to a job or ad posting.

## Career Services, T.2500

612-659-6723

### Minneapolis Community and Technical College

1501 Hennepin Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55403

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# Guidelines

## 1. Choose a letterhead format.

- Every item you send must look exactly alike (paper, font type, color, etc.).

## 2. Keep them short ( $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page in length).

- Each paragraph should have no more than 4-5 sentences.
- The longer they are, the less likely the cover letter will be read.

## 3. Address the letter to a specific person by name and title.

- If you are responding to an ad, call the company and ask the name of the person hiring. As a last resort, address it to the Human Resource Department.

## 4. Avoid starting each sentence with the word “I”.

## 5. Match your experience to the company’s requirements.

- Go through the ad line by line and write down every requirement, then opposite every requirement write down what’s relevant from your education, volunteer, internship and work experiences that relate to the requirements of the job.
- Then narrow down to your strongest points and turn them into mini-success stories.

## 6. Edit your cover letter for typos and spelling errors.

- Have someone else review your cover letter for content, inclusion of relevant qualifications and to catch any missed typos or errors.

## 7. The average time spent reading a cover letter is 20-30 seconds.

- To improve employer’s attention and make your qualifications stand out use bulleting, highlighting, under-lining, bolding, indenting, and quantifying sparingly.
- If you make your letter easy to read, you greatly increase the chance it will be read.

## 8. Save a copy on your computer of every letter you send.

- You may be able to recycle paragraphs in future letters.

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# Cover Letter Example

Date  
Name of Contact  
Title  
Name of Company  
Street Address  
City, State /Zip Code

Dear (name of contact),

Enclosed please find my resume in response to your posting for a (name of position). This position is of great interest to me, since your requirements and my background have many parallels.

My qualifications include experience in the areas of (you can change these as needed):

- Accomplishments in the areas needed for the position you are applying for.
- Knowledge in the areas needed for the position you are applying for.
- Transferable skills needed to succeed in this position or industry.

Include a statement that demonstrates skills you possess that are needed for the position. Include a statement about your desire to do this type of work or work for this organization you are applying to.

Closing statement requesting an opportunity to meet and further discuss your qualifications. Please contact me at (612) 659-6700 to arrange for an interview at a mutually convenient time.

Sincerely,

Your Name

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# Now you are ready to write your cover letter!

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Application Process**

Attach a cover letter with your resume when you:

- Email
- Apply online
- Drop it off

Dear Manager's name: \_\_\_\_\_

**State position interested in and why you are applying:** Writing this information in the very beginning of your letter will save the reader a lot of time searching for or trying to guess exactly what it is you're interested in.

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**State qualifications:** Describe your experience, education and skills that relate to qualifications in the job posting.

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**Request interview and provide follow-up information:** Provide a time when the employer can follow-up with you and when you will follow up with them.

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Sincerely,

Your name

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