Cover Letters

Cover letters are one-page documents written as part of the job/internship search that can either announce your availability for candidacy or accompany an application to help explain to an employer why you are a strong candidate for a particular position.



WKU Advising & Career Development Center

Resume vs. Cover Letter

Resume

- Present a concise summary of your relevant experiences and skills using bullet points.
- Provide more detailed, measurable achievements of your educational and relevant experience.
- Resumes incorporate keywords from the job description to demonstrate your fit for the role.
- 1 – 2 pages in length based on your relevant experience.
- Key to making it easy for employers to scan and quickly identify your relevant qualifications.

Cover Letter

- Introduce yourself and highlight your relevant qualifications in well-structured paragraphs.
- Highlight two or three examples of your prior experiences to demonstrate why you're an ideal candidate.
- Exhibit your genuine interest and understanding of the specific position and/or company.
- One full page in length. Limit your cover letter length to 4 paragraphs.
- Can serve as a writing sample, showcasing your communication skills.



Cover Letters

Crafting an Effective Cover Letter

With many employment positions, you may be asked to submit a cover letter or letter of interest. A cover letter is an introduction to your resume and details your qualifications for a particular position or role. Cover letters are written specifically to each individual job posting, using the key skills the job posting is looking for. We recommend submitting one even if it is optional. When properly written, the letter can help the reader navigate and highlight important items on your resume. This is your opportunity to clearly convey in words how your personal experiences connect to a specific position. This is your time to shine! This section will explain the purpose of a cover letter, best suggestions for content and formatting, and a sample document to display all components together.

Things to Keep in Mind:

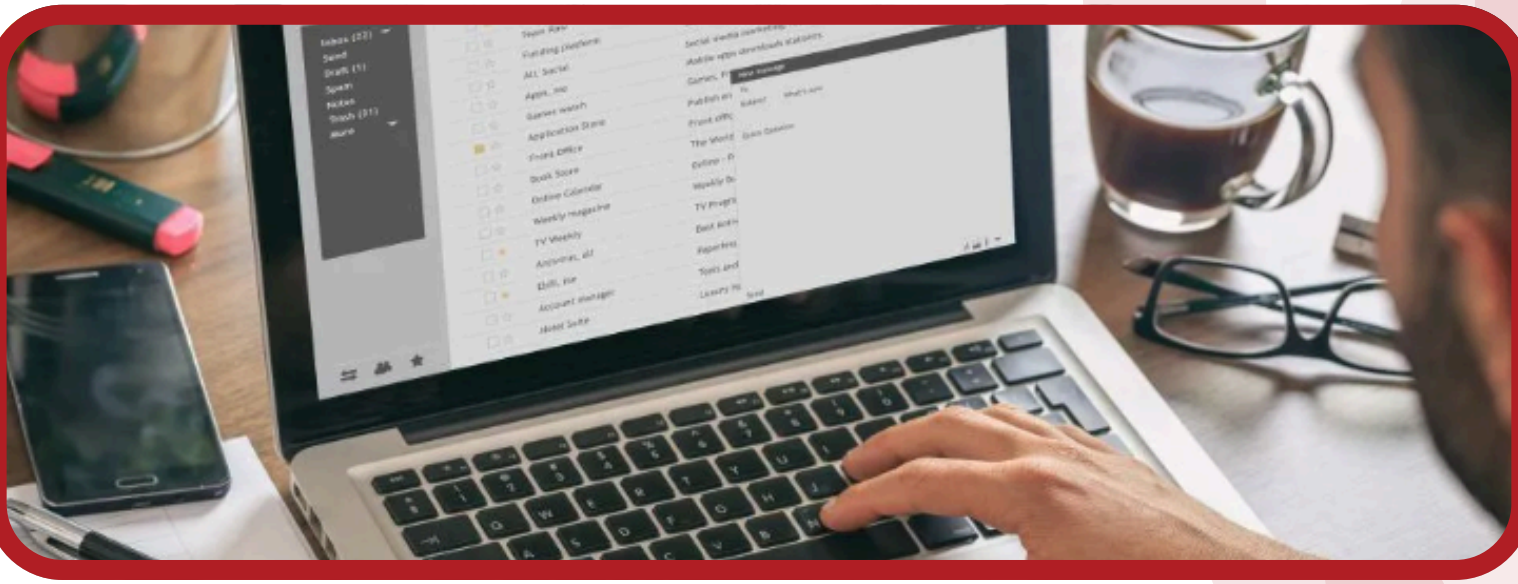
- There is no singular cover letter for every single position.
- Cover letters are typically one page or less (unless otherwise specified by the employer).
- Your cover letter should not mirror resume content; Cover letters are meant to add depth to their understanding of why you qualify or are a good fit for the position.
- Clearly connect your experiences to the skills required for the position



Components of a Cover Letter

Header
Within your header, your contact information you list on your cover letter should be same as your resume. The date listed on your cover should be the date that you are submitting the cover letter. Make your best effort to include the hiring manager's title if possible (e.g., Director of Human Resources). Always include the company's physical address in the header of your cover letter. Refer to the reader/hiring manager by their full name if able, but if not, use "Dear Hiring Manager:"

Introduction
It is important that you craft an opening paragraph that will hook your reader's attention. Your opening paragraph will set the stage for the rest of the cover letter include the "why" for your application and why you want this specific job at this company. You should open the letter with a statement of why you are writing. Opening tells what the job title you're applying for is and where you found it. The introductory paragraph will contain 3-5 skills you possess that the company seeks in a new hire and shows attention to exact requirements.



Body

First Paragraph

- Introduce yourself and the position you're seeking.
- Explain why you are interested in the position and organization.
- Mention anyone who referred you in the first sentence.

Second/Third Paragraph

- Connect your skills and experiences to the job description.
- Use specific examples from academic, work, volunteer, or leadership experiences.
- Highlight results, numbers, and accomplishments.
- Use language from the job description when appropriate.
- Add to your resume rather than repeat it.

Conclusion

You've successfully outlined your abilities as it relates to the role, yay! Now that you are here, it is important to end the letter on a positive note to reiterate the skills you have previously outlined in your letter. If there is something unique about the company you are applying to become a part of that you can relate to, really like, etc., add it! Once you feel you have touched on all that you can, thank the reader for their time and invite the reader to contact you.



Template

Your Name

Bowling Green, KY 42101 • (555)-555-5555 • xxxxyyyy@gmail.com • linkedin.com/in/my_profile

Today's Date

Fredrick College Business Department
WVU Business Programs
100 College Ave.
Morgantown, WV 55555

Dear Selection Committee:

1st Paragraph: Introduction. Greet the reader and inform him or her of the position title and area/department to which you are applying. Reference how you found the position or who referred you to apply. Summarize your intention and reason for your interest in the job and/or company. Transition into the next paragraph.

2nd and/or 3rd Paragraph: Qualifications and Fit. Help the employer see how your qualifications and experiences meet the needs of the position. Mention specific qualifications that you believe will be of greatest interest to the organization, slanting your remarks toward addressing specified requirements needed for success listed in the position description. Do not simply restate your résumé. Rather, summarize your most relevant skills and experiences as they relate to the employer's needs. Help the employer see how you are a strong fit for the organization's culture by highlighting what interests you about the mission, vision, values, and/or projects and services. Emphasize how you would like to contribute your qualifications to benefit the organization.

Final Paragraph: Conclusion. Close by making a request for an opportunity to talk with the employer and include your contact information. If you intend to follow up with an email or phone call, you may say so here. If your request is not concerning an interview, but more information about the organization and current job openings, you can request the information be sent electronically. Prior to requesting this information, make sure it is not readily available on the organization's website. Include your contact information and any preferences for how you prefer to be contacted. Thank employers for their consideration of your application materials.

Sincerely,

Your Handwritten Signature

Your Name

Example

Preyesh Kapoor

Bowling Green, KY 42101 • (555)-555-5555 • xxxxyyyy@gmail.com • linkedin.com/in/my_profile

February 20, 2021

Fredrick College Business Department
WVU Business Programs
100 College Ave.
Morgantown, WV 55555

Dear Selection Committee:

Please accept my attached resume for the position of Office Assistant - Business Programs as advertised on the West Virginia University employment website. Based on the description of the primary duties and responsibilities of the Office Assistant, I believe I would be an excellent fit for this position for three specific reasons.

Communication: Over time and through my varied work-related experiences, I have had the opportunity to develop great communication skills. As a teacher, I was able to impart essential information to classrooms of young children. As a marketing and technology coordinator, I learned the skills needed to communicate through the written word, both on-line and in print. Lastly, as co-manager of the coffee shop/café my husband and I ran for thirteen years, I became adept at reading people and making meaningful conversation in one-on-one encounters. When I taught adults in my seminars and cooking classes, I was able to stand up in front of a room of 12-15 people and share healthy living information in a passionate and encouraging way through multi-media presentations and follow-up emails.

Interpersonal Skills: Every job that I've held required that I be able to work well with others. My ability to use intelligence and common sense helps me understand and relate to people in many different settings, such as classrooms, offices, and, most recently, a coffee shop. Working with customers over the last 13 years in our coffee shop taught me how to listen and respond to specific requests, to deliver delicious products, provide a comfortable environment, and establish relationships that were welcoming and inviting—all which resulted in customers returning again and again.

Attention to Detail: Many of my career experiences have had some sort of written component, including lesson plans, newspaper articles, on-line job postings, web site management, and recipe development. Paying attention to detail is inherent in each of these situations, and any discrepancy in a line of code, a misspelled word, a job detail, or mismeasurement in a recipe will result in a flawed outcome. I take pride in proofing, editing, and in general catching every error that is humanly possible, so that the product I'm responsible for is of the highest quality.

In closing, I believe I would be an excellent fit for this position. Please feel free to contact me at 555-555-5555 or xxxxyyyy@gmail.com at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Preyesh Kapoor

Preyesh Kapoor

WKU ADVISING & CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Cover Letters

CONNECT WITH US
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



https://linktr.ee/wkuacdc



careerhelp@wku.edu