

Cover Letter Checklist

Your cover letter is frequently the first impression that you make with a potential employer and it's important that you take the time to focus on the employers' needs. Below are some key things to keep in mind to help you write a cover letter that will get the employer's attention! Note that the checklist is not for a specific application but for a general guideline.

Introduction

- Customized to the position and organization
- Includes where/how you found out about the position
- Shows genuine interest in the position and captures the employer's attention after research
- Highlights key strengths/assets that you would bring to the position and organization

Middle Paragraph(s)

- Supports the key strengths highlighted in the introduction; any skills, knowledge and attributes described in your letter should match the employer's requirements
- Provides 2-3 strong examples to support your stated strengths (e.g. if leadership skills are important provide an example that clearly demonstrates your strong leadership skills)
- Includes an appropriate amount of detail in examples to illustrate relevant skills and attributes
- Shows fit with the organization (can also be done in opening and/or closing paragraph)
– do your homework and be sure to research the organization

Note: these paragraphs are not meant to repeat what you put on your resume. Rather, they are a place for you to provide more relevant details.

Closing

- Reiterate interest in and fit with the position and/or organization
- Thank the employer and request next steps with confidence; could also include contact info.
- Includes an appropriate closing salutation and signs the cover letter

Format

- Should not be longer than one page with appropriate font size and margins
- Follows business format and contains your contact information
- Contains accurate employer information and includes an appropriate salutation
- Easy to read and divided into paragraphs of appropriate lengths
- Content within each paragraph is well-organized, flows and easy to follow
- Free of typos, spelling and grammar mistakes – again proofreading is essential!

* A cover letter is a sample of your writing skills and the quality of your work