



## Writing an Effective Cover Letter

Many people are intimidated by the prospect of writing a cover letter and find it to be one of the more difficult things about their job search (only second to writing their resume).

A cover letter serves as an introduction to your resume. It is not intended to be an epic memoir of your work experience, but a short and concise document that highlights some key points on your resume. It is meant to emphasize your fit with and desire for the position for which you are applying.

Your cover letter should only be **3-4 short paragraphs long** with the first paragraph focusing on your reason for making contact, the position title, a job posting number (if applicable), and details on where you accessed the posting or who referred you.

The second and/or third paragraph(s) should focus on why you are a good fit for the position and how your unique skills, training and education make you a good candidate for the opportunity. This is also the portion of the letter where if referred by an employee of the organization, you would be complimentary of the organization based on information given to you the referring individual. You would also use this section to mention any relevant information you know about the company to show that you have done your research.

The final paragraph is to be used for expressing your interest in an interview, thanking them for their time and offering to provide any additional information they may require of you. This is where you could also discuss salary requirements if requested. For details on how to negotiate a salary, please refer to the Salary Negotiation document

You will see links to three different examples of cover letters on the site.

Cover letter for a job posting in a newspaper or on the internet

Cover letter for a direct referral by a friend/colleague at employer

Cover letter of interest – To be used to express interest in working for an organization without a specific job being posted.