A good cover letter introduces you to the employer, indicates why you are interested in the role/why you are a good fit, and suggests a meeting or interview. It should not reiterate everything in the resume, but should complement and expand upon the resume and support a position as to why you should be considered further. Remember that the main purpose of a cover letter is to get the reader interested enough to want to read your resume.

Getting started:

- Type your letter on 8 1/2" x 11" paper to match your resume. Use an easily readable font size and type, e.g. Times New Roman 12pt.
- Keep it brief (no more than four paragraphs). You will need to be concise and not ramble.
- Use your own style of writing, i.e. don’t use formal words that you would never use in a typical professional email.

Content:

- Address your letter to a specific person (you may need to do some research to find a name). Use Mr., Ms., or a similar title unless you have been asked to address them by their first name.
- First paragraph: Brief introduction on how you heard about the position and why you applied.
- Second/third paragraph: Provide detail on what makes you a good fit for the role and what sets you apart from other applicants
  - Do not just repeat or paraphrase information in your resume. This is your opportunity to tell the story your resume can’t. Try to be personal if possible and if related to the job. For example, “I’ve always wanted to work in the computer science field. My dad works in software development and I’ve been coding since I was eight. I built on that knowledge with my internship at …”. Be careful not to tell your life story. Stay professional and relevant.
- Last paragraph: Close by thanking them for their time and inviting them to review your resume. Express interest in hearing back and scheduling an interview or phone call.

Additional Tips:

- Proofread your letter for correct spelling, sentence structure, and overall grammar.
- Avoid excessive use of “I,” “my,” and “me”; blend the letter and the resume.
- Never send a form letter. Each letter should be individually composed; however, you should save copies of all of your cover letters. Once a good letter has been developed, it may be used as a model many times with slight revisions.
Name of the Recipient  
Title  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip  

Dear Mr./Ms. ___________,

Your opening paragraph should make the reader want to keep reading. Tell how you heard about the job and what prompted you to apply. Include information that demonstrates your specific interest in the company.

Your second and possibly third paragraph should give details of your background that will show the reader why they should consider you as a candidate. Expand on information in your resume rather than repeating it. Focus on why you are a great fit and what value you will bring the company. You are telling your story, but be sure to keep it concise and to the point. If this paragraph gets too long or if you have multiple points, split the paragraph in two.

In your closing paragraph, invite the reader to review your resume for more information on your qualifications. Reiterate your interest in the position and the company and include information on how you can be contacted (email and phone #) to set up a meeting or interview.

Best regards,

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