

The Cover Letter Guide

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A cover letter is an introduction of a candidate and should precede the resume. A cover letter should provide a brief synopsis of a candidate's personality, enthusiasm and strengths as well as express a candidate's desire to work for a particular company, in a specific industry or a particular capacity. A cover letter provides an opportunity to highlight competencies and characteristics that make a candidate a unique candidate.

A cover letter is a representation of a candidate. An employer will analyze a cover letter to determine things about a candidate that include written communication skills, the ability to persuade and express a point, the ability to represent oneself and the ability to be neat and organized. Thus, an impeccable and error free cover letter is necessary in a competitive job market.

A cover letter is an uninterrupted chance to tell an employer about yourself and to add depth to the credentials highlighted on your resume. Treat the cover letter much like a one-sided interview, using a personal, yet professional, tone that adds a sense of who you are as an individual, why you are interested in this particular employer and why you will work well at that particular office.

Parts of a cover letter:

- 1) **Contact Information:** The first section or header includes your contact information: name, street address, city, state, zip code, contact number and email address. If you have a college degree or credentials with initials (MBA, BBA, AAS, SPHR, PHR, PMP, etc.) include the initials after your name. Center this information and bold your name.
- 2) **Salutation:** It is best if you know a specific name, then start with Dear Jane Dow. If you do not know a specific name address Dear Hiring Manager or To Whom It May Concern.
- 3) **Cover Letter Body:** The body of your cover letter lets the employer know what position you are applying for, why the employer should select you for an interview, and how you will follow-up.
 - a. The first paragraph, the introductory paragraph, is our chance to grasp your reader by the collar and get their attention. Mention as position of interest as "I am initiating contact to declare my candidacy for the Manager position posted on your website" or I am submitting to express interest in the Manager position posted on Facebook". Limit to 3 sentences.
 - b. The second paragraph, the sales pitch, is your hook where you highlight examples of the work performed and achieved results. Draw on your key competencies from your resume, though don't copy it word for word. Bullet points in this paragraph are effective in drawing your reader's eye to your successes. Limit to 4 sentences or 2 sentences with 5 bullet points.

- c. The third paragraph, the closing paragraph, is where you tactfully closeout the message. Suggest next steps by requesting a meeting or suggesting a call. Limit to 3 sentences.
- 4) Ending Salutation: Close with “Kind Regards” or “Best Regards” followed by 4 spaces and your name. If you have a college degree or credentials with initials (MBA, BBA, AAS, SPHR, PHR, PMP, etc.) include the initials after your name.

The following pages are statements to provide direction in writing a cover letter as well as examples of cover letters. A candidate who decides to use the examples should modify them to match their background.

Suggestions for Direction (Do Not Limit Yourself To The Following)

People first oriented candidate who has demonstrated comfort collaborating on functionally and ethnically diverse teams in the workplace and my community to complete assignments, exceed goals and elevate standards.

My success in my roles can be attributed to my people first orientation, customer engagement skills and attractive personality as well as my character attributes that include being motivated, enthusiastic and results-oriented.

Throughout my career search and conversations with knowledgeable professionals, I have come to respect the professionalism that characterizes your firm and its employees. I am confident that the company team’s values and objectives would highly complement my own strengths and enthusiasm.

Polished candidate who has demonstrated quality work ethic for previous employers by working my assigned schedule and working over-time when needed. I show up on time and always have a positive attitude and smile.

Highly motivated, dedicated and enthusiastic candidate who continually focuses on professional development and success for my team and the company. My commitment to success and passion for people are the main reasons for my professional success.

I have been successful in sales, customer first and staff management focused roles that require developing and implementing strategies that increase customer loyalty, foster team collaboration and requires accountability. I have led projects to decrease shrinkage (losses), increase revenues and attain stability.

[INSERT NAME]
[INSERT ADDRESS]
[INSERT CITY, STATE, ZIP]
[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]
[INSERT EMAIL]

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am a seasoned and diversely skilled candidate who has attained career success and a diversified skill set by demonstrating good work ethic, meshing well with colleagues and complying with all rules; which has led to increased opportunities and responsibilities in the workplace.

I have been successful in sales, customer service and administrative support [CHANGE FOCUSES IF NECESSARY] focused roles that require team collaboration to ensure the on-time and accurate completion of projects and utilization of proven strategies to increase customer satisfaction and retention [CHANGE SPECIALTIES IF NECESSARY].

Please consider my request for an interview to further discuss my qualifications and to learn more about the opportunity. I can be reached at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] at your earliest convenience.

Kind Regards,

[INSERT NAME]

Enclosure: Resume

[INSERT NAME]

[INSERT ADDRESS]

[INSERT CITY, STATE, ZIP]

[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]

[INSERT EMAIL]

Dear Hiring Manager,

From the first day I entered the workforce, I have consistently realized my objective of having a great time, making people happy, supporting colleagues and exceeding expectations. However, I have never believed that meeting those criteria alone was good enough. If you agree that service delivery and communications should exceed expectations, we should talk.

To help you learn more about my track record of success, I have enclosed my resume. While it illustrates my experience and training, what it cannot communicate is my dedication to my craft. My professional creed includes:

- Pride in the quality of my work, and a willingness to personally perform even the most menial tasks to remove project obstacles and get the job done
- Skilled in building lasting relationships with clients, vendors, community partners and staff
- Excellent skills in guiding, motivating, training and mentoring colleagues
- Greeting everyone with an enthusiastic smile and warm welcome

Based on my experience and strong commitment to my craft, I know I will add significant value to your team. I look forward to discussing my capabilities in more detail and am available for a personal interview at your convenience. I can be reached at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] at your earliest convenience.

I wish you and your organization continued success, growth and prosperity.

Kind Regards,

[INSERT NAME]

Enclosure: Resume

[INSERT NAME]

[INSERT ADDRESS]

[INSERT CITY, STATE, ZIP]

[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]

[INSERT EMAIL]

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am initiating contact to declare my candidacy for employment at your organization. My best qualities that I bring to the table and can hit the ground running with include:

- **Team Collaboration:** I have been successful working on functionally and ethnically diverse teams to ensure the on-time completion of assignments and quality service delivery
- **Flexibility:** I can work a flexible schedule, which includes nights, weekends, holidays and over-time
- **Appearance:** I have a professional demeanor and strong presence
- **Punctuality:** I will work my assigned schedule and arrive to work on-time
- **Character:** I am full of enthusiasm and have an attractive personality

Please consider my request for an interview to further discuss my qualifications and to learn more about the opportunity. I can be reached at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] at your earliest convenience.

I wish you and your organization continued success, growth and prosperity.

Kind Regards,

[INSERT NAME]

Enclosure: Resume

[INSERT NAME]

[INSERT ADDRESS]

[INSERT CITY, STATE, ZIP]

[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]

[INSERT EMAIL]

Dear Hiring Manager,

People first oriented candidate who has demonstrated comfort collaborating on functionally and ethnically diverse teams in the workplace and my community to complete assignments, exceed goals and elevate standards.

My success in my roles can be attributed to my people first orientation, customer engagement skills and attractive personality as well as my character attributes that include being motivated, enthusiastic and results-oriented.

Please consider my request for an interview to further discuss my qualifications and to learn more about the mutually beneficial opportunity. I can be reached at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] at your earliest convenience.

Kind Regards,

[INSERT NAME]

Enclosure: Resume

[INSERT NAME]

[INSERT ADDRESS]

[INSERT CITY, STATE, ZIP]

[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]

[INSERT EMAIL]

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am a highly motivated, dedicated and enthusiastic candidate who continually focuses on professional development and success for my team and the company. My commitment to success and passion for people are the main reasons for my professional success. I am initiating contact to declare my candidacy for employment at your organization.

My best qualities and attributes that make me an ideal candidate include:

- Superior interpersonal and communication skills to foster meaningful relationships with customers and staff
- Commitment to professional ethics, treating people with respect and greeting everyone with enthusiasm
- Proven abilities in conflict resolution, people management and motivation
- A self-starter with high energy enabling maximum and efficient work under pressure
- Accustomed to working in a multicultural environment that emphasizes inclusion

Please consider my request for an interview to further discuss my qualifications and to learn more about the opportunity. I can be reached at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for considering me.

I wish you and your organization continued success, growth and prosperity.

Kind Regards,

[INSERT NAME]

Enclosure: Resume