

COVER LETTER TIPS

By: Eileen J. Heely for Rocky Point Career Advisory Partnership

The cover letter is an introductory communication accompanying the resume. Its purpose is to highlight relevant experience and convince the reader to review your resume. It should be short and to the point with no typos or grammatical errors.

PERSONAL HEADING

DATE OF LETTER

EMPLOYER'S NAME

TITLE

ORGANIZATION

STREET ADDRESS, FLOOR

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

Dear Mr./Mrs. _____:

OPENING PARAGRAPH

- Briefly identify yourself and the position you are seeking.
- Name the source of the opening (i.e., published or personal referral).
- Indicate that your resume is attached.

MIDDLE SECTION (ONE OR TWO PARAGRAPHS)

- Summarize how your background fits the position requirements.
- Refer to details of your background that are of immediate applicability to your employer.
- Give one or two specific reasons why you are particularly interested in working at the organization.
- If your experience is not directly related to the job for which you are applying, mention pertinent, transferable skills acquired in a completely different setting.

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

- State that you can be contacted at (PHONE NUMBER OR EMAIL) to further discuss your background and skills and that you look forward to hearing from them to schedule an interview.
- Thank them for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(YOUR SIGNATURE)

YOUR NAME TYPED

(ATTACHMENT)

GUIDE FOR RESUME WRITING

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The resume is a 1-2 page summary of educational and professional experience. Its primary objective is to generate interviews with prospective employers.

RESUME STYLE

Visual Form

- Must be clear and concise
- No set format – as long as you are consistent with form
- Highlight major sections and parts using the following techniques: margins, bold print, indentations, caps, underlining, spacing, and different fonts
- Standard size paper (8 ½ x 11)
- White paper
- **NO SPELLING OR GRAMMATICAL ERRORS**
- Laser printed
- Conservative approach to overall document

Content

- Organized in terms of your strengths
- No complete sentences, use short statements
- Use action verbs, descriptive adjectives and adverbs
- Omit personal pronouns

CONTENT HEADINGS

Personal Data

- Name, address (including zip code), telephone number for home, cell phone (if applicable) and email address
- No other personal information unless it is experience that directly relates to the position desired.

Objective (Optional)

- Objectives are best used if you are trying to redirect the reader and have them focus only on a specific portion of your experience.
- If you are not careful, an Objective may exclude you from potential opportunities by being so specific.
- If an Objective is too vague, it is useless and just takes up space.

GUIDE FOR RESUME WRITING

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Education

- Reverse chronological order (begin with the most advanced degree)
- Include name of institution, degree and major
- Date degree received or expected
- GPA if relevant and above 3.0, include special Honors/Awards

Experience

- Reverse chronological order (begin with the most recent/current employment)
- Include dates of employment, name of employer, city, state, your title and a brief description of your responsibilities
- When applicable to the desired job, include internship, volunteer, part-time or summer employment
- Use action verbs to describe positions: administered, analyzed, assisted, conducted, coordinated, created, designed, developed, devised, directed, established, evaluated, expanded, facilitated, formulated, implemented, initiated, introduced, managed, organized, originated, planned, prepared, proposed, recommended, reorganized, researched, restructured, revised, strengthened, supervised, trained
- Quantify details, activities, or results whenever possible (how much of something)

Skills

- List all relevant skills (computer programs, systems, languages, musical or artistic ability)

Memberships

- Focus on professional memberships. Only include religious, political and social organizations if the experience directly relates to the desired position.

References

- Indicate that references will be furnished upon request.

