

Career Center Cover Letter Packet



Revised on April 17, 2015

An electronic version of this packet is available
at www.crc.losrios.edu/careercenter

COVER LETTER

What is a cover letter?

The cover letter plays an important role in your job search. The purpose of the cover letter is to introduce you to a prospective employer. It lets the employer know precisely why you are applying to their specific opportunity. A cover letter should always accompany a resume when sent to a potential employer.

Your enthusiasm for the position, the reason you are writing, and the articulation of the contributions that you can make to the organization based on your qualifications, as well as your interest in obtaining an interview are all crucial components of a cover letter.

The cover letter is often an initial contact between you and the potential employer. The contents of the letter should strive to make a great first impression.

Quick guidelines

- Personalize each cover letter, tailoring it to each specific job opportunity and employer.
- Use the same paper and letterhead for the cover letter, resume, and your references page. This gives a consistent and professional appearance.
- Check carefully for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and typing errors.
- Address each employer by name and correct title; try not to address by first name.
- Keep your letter to one page in length: $\frac{3}{4}$ of the page to one full page are acceptable.
- Refer to accomplishments on your resume that relate to the position or employer.

- Be positive! Convey enthusiasm and desire for the position.



It's all in the details!

1. No typos, spelling errors. Have someone else read it over to make sure everything makes sense.
2. The letter should either be addressed to a specific person or a job title (i.e., Dear Career Center Director or Dear Hiring Manager). If the person's name is easily identified as male or female, use either Mr. Smith or Ms. Smith. Do not include the first name unless you can't tell the gender (i.e., names like Chris, Pat, Terry, etc.).
3. Refer to a job description in the first paragraph. "I am applying for the position listed in the latest issue of . . ." or "I am applying for the position listed on your website," etc.
4. Indicate how you heard about the position in the first paragraph.
5. Indicate your current status in the first paragraph (i.e., "I am pursuing an Associate's degree in Business, with an emphasis in Business Administration at Cosumnes River College, Sacramento.") and your education status (i.e., I am working on my A.A. in Accounting at Cosumnes River College, expected May 2016.)
6. Indicate that you know something about their organization based on their website, something you learned from another person, or another specific reason for your interest in the company.
7. Your middle paragraph or paragraphs should not include "bold assertions." Instead, provide actual evidence/proof of what you've done in the past that indicates that you can do the job. This is the most important element of the cover letter. Instead of "I have strong communications skills or I am this or that," say, "As a college student, I have gained knowledge of . . ." or even better, "In my internship, I developed a comprehensive program..."
8. The next paragraph must display a level of passion for working in your field of study or the career field. This is best demonstrated by previous experience; describing how you identified your passion for this type of work or setting can also be helpful.
9. Your final paragraph should refer to the fact that you are also enclosing a copy of your resume and anything else that has been requested (for example, a list of three references). Also indicate what you expect the next step to be ("I look forward to

hearing from you in the near future” or “I will call your office next week to follow-up on this letter.”).

- 10.** This letter needs to be detailed but also written concisely (without irrelevant information) and should be at least three quarters of a page to one full page in length.

COVER LETTER DESCRIPTION: Student-Centered

First Last Name

Mailing Address

Phone

Email Address

Date

Name, Professional Title

Company

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear _____,

First Section – State why you are writing, and how you heard of the position.

Second Section – Explain your qualifications and how they apply to this particular position.

Third Section – Create an appropriate closing for the next action step.

Sincerely,

Your signature in black ink (4 spaces between “Sincerely” and your legal typed name)

Your legal typed name

COVER LETTER FORMAT AND DESCRIPTION

Letterhead containing:

NAME
Mailing Address
Phone
Email Address

Date

Name, Professional Title
Company
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear _____,

First Section – State why you are writing, name of the position or type of work for which you are applying and mention how you heard of the position or organization. Indicate that you know something about their organization based on their website, something you learned from another person, or another concrete reason for your interest in them.

Second Section – Explain why you are interested in working for this employer. It is important to convey enthusiasm for the company, the position and the industry. Describe your specific skills, accomplishments and personal traits which qualify you for this job or field. Refer to your education, training and previous experiences that apply to this position. If this paragraph gets too lengthy, break it into two paragraphs. This section should answer the employer’s question “Why should we hire you?”

Third Section – Thank them for taking the time to review your enclosed resume and/or application. Let them know you are looking forward to the next step in the process and the opportunity to meet with them in person. Indicate how you can be reached and thank them for their consideration. Mention any enclosures.

Sincerely,

Your signature in black ink (4 spaces between “Sincerely” and your legal typed name)

Your legal typed name

COVER LETTER EXAMPLE: Student-Centered

Amy White

1234 Calvine Road, Sacramento, CA 95823
916-123-4567 • angelamcd@yahoo.com

July 4, 2015

Mr. Oscar Gomez, Manager
Cosumnes River College, College Store
8401 Center Parkway
Sacramento, CA 95823

Dear Mr. Gomez:

It is with a great deal of interest and enthusiasm that I am applying for the Accounting Assistant with your firm. I heard about this position through the Career Center at Cosumnes River College. I am especially interested in your firm because of the many innovative programs that are listed on your website.

I am working on my A.A. degree in Accounting at Cosumnes River College, expected May 2016. As a result of the coursework I took as an Accounting major, I have acquired excellent skills in the accounting field. I am competent in areas such as auditing, financial and managerial accounting, and business administration. Additionally, I have earned certificates in Accounting Computer Applications and Taxation.

I strongly believe that my three years of experience as an Office Assistant for Dalton, Inc., combined with my technical knowledge of accounting, uniquely qualify me for the position. My knowledge of computer programs such as QuickBooks and Microsoft Word and Excel helped me be more efficient and contributed to my overall success at the company.

I believe that I have the energy, desire and ability to make a valuable contribution to your firm. I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and further discuss my qualifications. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at 916-123-4567 or via email at amywhite@yahoo.com. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy White

Amy White

COVER LETTER EXAMPLE: Experienced Professional

Steven Student

Mailing Address

Phone

Email Address

July 2, 2015

Mr. Michael Krauss, Director of Human Resources
State of California - Department of General Services
1111 Stockton Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95834

Dear Mr. Krauss:

I am eager to apply for the position of Human Resource Analyst with the State of California - Department of General Services. I heard about the position through the Transfer and Career Center at Cosumnes River College. Having worked over four years in both the private and public sector, I feel that the knowledge I've gained is readily transferable to the Department of General Services.

I have attained my Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration from California State University, Sacramento in May 2015. In my current position as a Human Resource Assistant with the State of California Personnel Board, I have become very aware of the demands placed on state personnel competing with the private sector. With a department task force, a team of us researched, analyzed, and revised 15 recruitment methods that are presently being implemented in five state offices in the Sacramento area. In addition, my breadth of skills includes training in benefit administration, compensation, state policy, and recruitment.

Specific skills that I believe would contribute to your department include my knowledge and experience with Microsoft Word, Excel, and Access. I am a self-directed individual who enjoys working independently and in a group capacity. My abilities to synthesize information and communicate both in a written and oral format are strengths that are complimentary to the core of this position. My colleagues tell me I am adamant in getting any job done well, and also have fun along the way.

I am a firm believer in quality human resource management, and value the contributions your department makes in the field. I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you during an oral interview soon. Enclosed is my resume. Please feel free to contact me at 916-123-4567 if you have any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Steven Student

Steven Student