



How to Write a Cover Letter

Created: Dec. 02, 2016

Updated:

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is a letter to potential employers outlining why you are the best candidate for the position. It is a chance to outline accomplishments that may not fit in your resume or skills you would like to elaborate on. Try to keep your cover letter 1 page long.

What to Include

Header

Use the same header that you put on your resume. Confirm that it includes:

- **Name;** use your legal formal name, avoid abbreviations. Your name should be a larger font than the rest of the text in your resume.
- **Address;** use the address where you will be living when working at that job, sometimes your location can determine if you get the job over someone else.
- **Phone Number;** use the number that is the easiest for them to contact you. If it is a cell phone, ensure that your voicemail is professional and clearly states your name.
- **Email;** if you have a school email, use it. If not, make sure your email is appropriate and not silly or offensive.

Date & Reader

- Put the date that you will be submitting the application. Include month, day, and year.
- If you know the name of the person who will be reviewing your application, write:
 - Dear Samuel Smith,
 - To Samuel Smith,
- If the name of the person reviewing applications is unknown, write:
 - Dear Human Resources,
 - To Human Resources,

* “To whomever this may concern,” or “Dear *Company Name*” is not widely used anymore

Introduction Paragraph

This is the hook paragraph used to convince the reader that you are someone valuable and to keep reading. Make sure to include:

- The position you are applying for

- The company/department you are applying to
- What makes you stand out to the rest

Here are a few examples of a strong Introduction Paragraph:

- It is with great pleasure that I submit my application for the Receptionist position at the Deep Tissue Massage Therapy Clinic. I have recently been accepted to MacEwan University for the Massage Therapy diploma program. This opportunity interests me, as it would allow me to gain a strong understanding of message therapy while attending university.
- Please consider my application for the position of Sales Representative at Londonderry Sport Check. I am currently a high school student at Sturgeon Composite High School searching for a long term, part-time position. This opportunity interests me because it will allow me to use my communication skills in a professional environment and fulfill my passion to help others.

DO NOT WRITE:

- My name is....
 - Your name will appear in the header of your cover letter and resume, as well as at the bottom of your cover letter. Starting your introduction paragraph with “My name is...” will appear redundant and a waste of space.

Body Paragraphs

You will have 1-3 paragraphs that outline:

- Education
- Past work experiences
- Volunteer experiences
- Extracurricular activities
- Skills and strengths

You don't need to include each and every one of these. Only include information that you think is relevant to the job you're applying to.

Choose 1-3 of these points and turn them into paragraphs.

Concluding Paragraph

Your final paragraph will include:

- Position or company/department you're applying to
- Your contact information
- Signature (use the same name you used for your heading)
 - Sincerely,
 - Regards,
 - Thank you for your consideration,

Here are a few examples of strong Concluding Paragraphs:

- I know that I am an individual who will be valuable for the Deep Tissue Massage Therapy Clinic and am excited about being a part of your team. I look forward to meeting you to discuss what I can offer your organization. I can be reached by calling 555-5555 at any time or by email: myemail@gmail.com
- My communication skills gained through team projects will make me a valuable individual for Londonderry Sport Check. Thank you for taking the time to consider my application. I am excited about being a part of your team and look forward to meeting you. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 555-5555.

Biggest Mistakes of Cover Letter Writing

- **Retelling your resume**
 - Do not include the exact same information from your resume. It will become redundant and frustrate readers.
 - Use your cover letter to describe an accomplishment that you didn't have enough room to fit into your resume, or didn't really fit under a specific section.
- **Not providing enough detail**
 - Explain why your accomplishment is important, what skills you gained from it that will apply to the job, and how you completed it. Example:
 - I was able to complete all ten Business and Management modules during In Reach class. The entrepreneurial skills and knowledge I have gained from these modules will be beneficial when budgeting the cash register at the end of my shifts.
- **Typos and incorrect grammar**
 - Always, Always, ALWAYS have somebody proof read your resume and cover letter before submitting it. You will sometimes miss very small mistakes when looking at something for too long.
- **Not tailoring it to the position you're applying to**
 - A generic cover letter that you submit to multiple businesses isn't very effective. Adding the company name, position, and outlining skills that directly apply to that position makes your application more valuable to the reader, sells you better, and shows the reader that you put effort into trying to get the job.
- **LYING**
 - Do not ever lie on a cover letter or resume. You will eventually be caught.
- **Including weaknesses**
 - Use your resume and cover letter to show off your strengths, not your weaknesses. Don't include the times you failed, or what you're not good at.
 - May be a question in the interview, so prepare a smart answer just in case!

Sample Cover Letters

These are just samples. Please do not copy. Use this to outline your cover letter and give yourself ideas of what kinds of things you can include. Make your cover letter unique to you and your skills/strengths.

Amanda Glass

1234 1st Ave Edmonton, AB T8Y 2U8
1-780-555-5555
myemail@gmail.com

December 02, 2016

To Human Resources,

It is with great pleasure that I submit my application for the Receptionist position at the Deep Tissue Massage Therapy Clinic. I have recently been accepted to MacEwan University for the Massage Therapy diploma program. This opportunity interests me, as it would allow me to gain a strong understanding of message therapy while attending university.

My experiences at Sturgeon Composite High School have prepared me to work professionally in a customer service position. The course Cosmetology 30 has given me the opportunity to work in real life situations with real clients. Through this experience I have developed my customer service skills and have learned how to time manage in a fast paced environment. I am frequently praised for adapting to my surroundings quickly and positively engaging with clients.

I know that I am an individual who will be valuable for the Deep Tissue Massage Therapy Clinic and am excited about being a part of your team. I look forward to meeting you to discuss what I can offer your organization. I can be reached by calling 555-5555 at any time or by email: myemail@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Amanda Glass

Colin Williams

Box 56 Sturgeon County, AB T7Y 2U9
1-780-555-555
email@sturgeonstudents.com

December 02, 2016

To Human Resources,

Please consider my application for the position of Sales Representative at Londonderry Sport Check. I am currently a high school student at Sturgeon Composite High School searching for a long term, part-time position. This opportunity interests me because it will allow me to use my skills in a professional environment and fulfill my passion to help others.

I have developed excellent communication skills through my experiences on the SCHS basketball team. As a team, we have to communicate both on and off of the court to accomplish our goals of becoming better players and winning games. Due to how well we communicated, we won multiple tournaments and awards this year. My experience has led me to work well in teams which will be beneficial when working with other Sales Representatives and Supervisors at Sport Check.

I know that I am a valuable individual for Londonderry Sport Check. Thank you for taking the time to consider my application. I am excited about being a part of your team and look forward to meeting you. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 555-5555.

Regards,

Colin Williams