

Cover Letter - Structure and Content

- The cover letter, or letter of application, always **accompanies a résumé that is mailed**. A cover letter may or may not be required for an online posting, so **adhere to application guidelines**. A cover letter is NOT needed when handing your resume directly to an employer. In general, although a cover letter may not be formally requested, an assumption should be made that it is required.
- Your letter must be **free of errors and grammatically correct**. Do not over use the word “I”.
- If the employer asks you to include **salary requirements** in the letter, always state your requirements in a range, and that you are open to negotiation.
- **Customize your letter** to each organization and match your skills, experience, and personality traits to the position.
- **Read your letter out loud** to ensure that your ideas flow and to catch any awkward sentences or overuse of words or phrases.
- Use a **business letter format** with left-justified margins, and center the letter vertically on the page.
- The letter should be **no more than one page** in length and printed on the same paper as your résumé.
- For **electronic transmission of your letter**, employers often prefer certain formats. One of the easiest and most reliable methods is to **convert your cover letter to a PDF** through Adobe Acrobat Writer.

Cover Letter -- Sample Structure and Content

Your Present Street Address

City, State Zip Code

----- *1 Line Space*

Today's Date

----- *2 Line Spaces*

Individual's First and Last Name (If no name available, try to identify the organization if possible).

Title

Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

----- *1 Line Space*

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name: (Use “Dear Hiring Manager” if specific contact information is not available).

----- *1 Line Space*

Introduction. (First paragraph) • Indicate the position for which you are applying and how you learned of the opening (name of publication or website, career center, employment service, etc.). • Specify your major, degree, institution. • State basic reasons for applying and why interested in the position in a way that will capture the attention of the prospective employer.

----- *1 Line Space*

Body. (One to two paragraphs.) • Highlight your qualifications specific to the position. • State why you wish to work for this particular company, and how you can contribute to their products or services • If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. • If you have practical work experience or an internship, indicate specific achievements or unique qualifications. • Provide evidence of skills. • If asked to include “salary requirements,” always state a range and that you are open to negotiation.

----- *1 Line Space*

Conclusion. (Closing paragraph) • Express the fact that you are qualified for the position. • Indicate your desire for a personal interview to discuss your qualifications. • List your phone number and email in the letter and offer any assistance to help in a speedy response. • Advise the employer of your flexibility as to the time and place. If necessary, specify a certain time to call. • Indicate that you will call in one – two weeks to confirm that your materials have been received, or close with a statement or question that will encourage a response.

----- *1 Line Space*

Sincerely,

----- *3 Line Spaces*

Place your neatly handwritten signature here.

Your Name Typed

----- *1 Line Space*

Enclosures (ONLY needed if enclosing several documents.)

Thank You Letter - Structure and Content

- The thank you letter **can make a critical difference** in your candidacy and help you stand out among other candidates.
- Prepare your letter using a business letter format on high quality paper. Depending on your relationship with the person who interviewed you, a handwritten note on professional stationary or note card may also be appropriate.
- If you previously corresponded with the employer by email, it is acceptable to **send your thank you "letter" via email**. However, post mail often conveys a more personal touch.
- The letter should be **addressed to the person with whom you interviewed**. Ask for your interviewers' business cards, or write down the interviewers' titles and the proper spelling of their names before leaving the interview site. If there were a number of interviewers, send a customized thank you letter to each individual.
- Keep your letter brief and concise. Mention the date of your interview and **affirm your continued interest** in both the position for which you interviewed and the organization.
- **Reiterate your most important skills and qualifications**, how you expect to **contribute to the organization**, and any unique points of interest discussed during the interview. You may also add any details or skills you forgot in the interview, and you can also attempt to ease any reservations you heard from them.
- Express your appreciation for the opportunity to interview, tour the facilities, meet other employees, etc., and confirm follow up procedures.
- Supply any additional information that was requested at the time of the interview.
- Mail your thank you letter in a matching envelope within 24 – 48 hours following the interview.

Thank You Letter -- Sample Structure and Content

1234 Main Street
Kent, Ohio 44240

----- *1 Line Space*

Date

----- *2 Line Spaces*

Susan Smith
ABC Pharmaceutical Company
543 Main Street
City, Ohio 44444

----- *1 Line Space*

Dear Ms. Smith:

----- *1 Line Space*

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with you on Friday, March 2XXX. I appreciated the company tour and an opportunity to meet a number of your staff. The Account Representative position we discussed is an excellent opportunity for which I feel uniquely qualified.

----- *1 Line Space*

As we discussed, my background in the sciences as well as business will enable me to interact effectively with both physicians and pharmacists. Not only would I be able to discuss the technical aspects of your products, I understand first hand from my internship experience the importance of marketing strategies and building relationships, while also meeting the bottom line.

----- *1 Line Space*

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at (330) 333-3333, or via email at jjones@kent.edu. Again, thank you for the opportunity to interview for this exciting position. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

----- *1 Line Space*

Sincerely,

----- *3 Line Spaces*

Jill Jones

*Have your letters reviewed by a Career Advisor during daily drop-in hours.
For more information, visit www.kent.edu/career.*