

The Cover Letter

A secret weapon people forget about all the time.



The Importance of a Cover Letter

The Basics

A cover letter should always accompany your resume because it helps to introduce your resume. The letter tells the employer why you are applying for a specific position and highlights your background and qualifications.

The format of your letter should be consistent. Things to do:

- Keep it in a standard business format.
- Make sure there are no errors.
- Use the same font as on your resume; the size may vary.
- Use the same paper you used for your resume.
- Address letters to a specific individual in the organization who has the authority to hire. This is much more effective than writing to "Dear Sir or Madam." It demonstrates your initiative and genuine interest in the organization.
- Create a new cover letter for each position.

“Keep in mind that the cover letter is the first impression you convey, so make it excellent.”

“The cover letter tells the employer why you are applying for a specific position and highlights your background and qualifications.”

What to Include in a Cover Letter

Part One: Statement of Interest

Introduce yourself to the employer. Describe the position for which you are applying; explain how you learned about the position/company/organization. State why you are applying for the position (utilize referrals here). Identify characteristics of the company that appeal to you.

Part Two: Background Summary and Value-Selling

Highlight attributes pertinent to the position (why are you qualified?). Explain further something relevant to the position that is not fully treated in your resume (provide an example). Use the job description in this part to match your relevant experience and skill set to their requirements. *This is not a repeat of your resume.*

Part Three: Statement of Appreciation and Contact Information

Request the next step in the search process, whether it be a personal interview or response to your letter; include a statement of appreciation and your contact information.

First Impressions

Keep in mind that the cover letter is the first impression you convey, so make it excellent. Be direct and brief. The purpose of the cover letter and resume is to convince the employer that you are a candidate worthy of an interview.

17%

...the chance that your cover letter will be read by an interviewer. The letter is also a deciding factor on whether the person will get the interview.

* Information based on a study made by behiring in partnership with graphs.net.



Mary Jane Doe

554 Job Lane, Cincinnati, Ohio 45200 (513) 555-2100 marydoe@gmail.com

February 10, 2013

Ms. Julianne Jones
Executive Recruiter
Edward's Department Store
999 W. 9th Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45200

Dear Ms. Jones:

Please accept this letter and resume as application for the assistant buyer position advertised in the February 12 issue of The Cincinnati Enquirer.

My education and work experience have prepared me for this position. In addition to an associate degree in Sales/Marketing, I have practical retail experience in both sales and management. As a salesperson, I attained or exceeded sales goals on a regular basis and twice received the "Salesperson of the Month" award. My leadership, interpersonal, and customer service skills were further enhanced during my employment at Shoe Bonanza. I developed a training manual for all new employees and initiated several sales contests to increase store volume.

I would appreciate the opportunity to interview with Edward's Department Store. Please contact me at 513-555-2100 or marydoe@gmail.com at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mary Jane Doe

Mary Jane Doe

Enclosure: resume



UCBA Career Center

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