

# Cover Letter Guide

## Overview

A cover letter is used when you are responding to an announced opening or submitting your resume for consideration. A good letter will complement and concisely expand on your resume to communicate your fit with the position and organization.

### Tips

1. Research the intended recipient thoroughly and understand the breath of what the organizations does (e.g., products, services, and client base) before you begin writing.
2. Keep your letter short, no more than one page.
3. Prepare a specific letter for each employer. When possible, address each employer by name and title.
4. Open your letter with a strong sentence that will encourage the employer to keep reading. Indicate who you are and state the reason for writing, naming the position, company, and when you learned of the position.
5. Describe your strongest qualifications matching the job requirements and any unique skills and background that make you a perfect fit. Include specific accomplishment examples and results you have delivered to describe your skills and contributions.
6. Be sure to demonstrate how you can support the organization rather than how you hope to benefit from the job.
7. Tailor your letter to the interests and needs of the person to whom you are writing. Focus on outcomes that will help solve the employer's problems.
8. Check carefully for grammatical and typing errors. Have someone else proofread your letter before sending.
9. State your next step-that you look forward to the opportunity to further discuss your qualifications, etc. Thank them and provide contact information.

# Sample Cover Letter

## Letterhead

A formal letter sent through the mail should include the same letterhead used on your resume. A cover letter sent through email does not need to include this information.

Mary Smith

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April 5, 2021

Ms. Maria Lopez

[Company/Institution Name]

[Address]

[City, State, Zip Code]

## Salutation

Dear Mr., Ms., Dr. OR Hiring Manager  
(Avoid "To Whom it May Concern" or  
"Dear Sir/Madam").

## Opening Paragraph

Indicate who you are and state the reason for writing, naming the position, company and where you learned of the position.

Dear Ms. Maria Lopez:

This letter is to share my interest in the [position name/title] with [company/institution name] as [posted/announced] on [where you heard of the position]. I am a [degree program] major at Fresno Pacific University graduating in [anticipated graduation (month/year)] and am passionate about [what are you passionate about as it relates to the position]. I share [company/institution name] vision of [what is their vision]. As a [title] for [company/institution name], I [what did you do in relation to the vision] [or how you match their vision], which [how does that align with their vision?]. I feel this shared vision makes me a great fit for [company/institution name].

My coursework has equipped me with the knowledge of [what classes have you taken/learned]. Additionally, as a [title] for [company/institution name], I have [input job description/transferrable skills as it relates to the position].

OR (stronger if you have more relevant experience).

I understand you are seeking a person with [list qualifications on description that you possess] to fill this position. As a [title] for [company/institution name], I have [input job responsibilities as it relates to job description/qualifications]. Here are a few of my accomplishments while in that role:

- Accomplishment 1
- Accomplishment 2
- Accomplishment 3

Attached [are my application materials/resume]. I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss my qualifications. Feel free to contact me at [phone number] and/or [email address] if you have any questions or would like to schedule a time to discuss my candidacy.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Handwritten signature]

Mary Smith

Attachment(s)

## Body Paragraph(s)

What can you offer the employer?  
Describe your strongest qualifications matching the job requirements.  
Describe unique skills and background that make you a perfect fit.  
Include specific accomplishment examples.

## Closing Paragraph

State your next step - you look forward to the opportunity to further discuss your qualifications, etc. Thank them and provide contact information.