

COVER LETTERS 101

[Include the personalized letterhead you created for your resume with the exact same formatting]

Date

Contact First & Last Name
Company Name
Company Address
City, Province Postal Code

RE: Job Title to which you are applying

Dear Ms./Mr./Dr. [Last Name],

Opening Paragraph

- Include a 'hook' as your first sentence; start with something unique about yourself that connects you to the organization or demonstrate that you've done some research into the company. Many letters begin with, *Please accept my application for _____ position.* Your cover letter is your opportunity to make yourself stand out, so try to avoid this generic opening line and stand out right from the beginning.
- The opening paragraph should be tailored to the organization you are applying to by incorporating company research. Through your research, find something that connects your experience, interests, skills or values to the organization and try to communicate that in the first paragraph. Ask yourself if the same opening paragraph can be used on an application sent to another company and if the answer is *yes*, it's not tailored enough.

Body Paragraphs (2-3)

- Utilize your body paragraphs to focus in on the skills, experiences and accomplishments that you have that make you well-suited for the position.
- Rather than listing skills, consider using the S.T.A.R. (Situation, Task Action, Result) approach to describe examples in which you demonstrated your skills. These S.T.A.R. stories are more interesting to read and they are unique to you, therefore allowing you to stand out from other applicants.
- Make connections between your skills and how they will help you perform various aspects of the job.
- Consider using bullet points or other formatting strategies to demonstrate the link between your skills and those on the job posting; keep in mind that your cover letter should not be identical to your resume, but instead should be elaborating on the key pieces of your resume that connect to the job

Closing Paragraph

- Summarize the main skills/experiences you have to bring to the position.
- Thank the employer and express interest in meeting for an interview to further discuss your qualifications.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]