

Write a Cover Letter

A cover letter is a business letter addressed to a potential employer. It accompanies a résumé and provides important information about the writer. Think of a cover letter as a way to introduce yourself to a potential employer. It can also be used to highlight, explain, or expand on parts of your résumé. Your cover letter is your chance to let your personality shine. You can explain, in your own words, why you are the right person for the job.

Keep the length of your cover letter to one page, and proofread it carefully for grammar and spelling errors. You want your reader to see you as a competent, responsible professional.

Calvin James
823 17th Street
Town, Pennsylvania 55555

Include your name and address at the top of the cover letter.

March 29, 2011

Mr. Luis Perez
West End Apartments
8928 West Warren Street
Town, Pennsylvania 55555

Address your cover letter to a specific person rather than a general title, such as "Hiring Manager." Also include the name and address of the company.

Dear Mr. Perez:

Your tenant Andre Johnson recommended that I contact you about the maintenance supervisor position you are seeking to fill. I believe I am well qualified to deliver the services that you and your tenants need.

I have several years of experience in various construction fields and a plumbing certification. In addition, I have the tools and knowledge to handle just about any structural issue that your apartment buildings might have. I can install and repair air conditioners, furnaces, water heaters, ceiling fans, and appliances. I can remove and install carpeting and flooring. I can also repair apartment damage and prep apartments to look like new.

If you contact my references, you will find that I have a reputation for being honest, hard-working, and reliable. I am also easy to work with and friendly.

I have enclosed my résumé and a list of references. I would greatly appreciate meeting with you to discuss this position further. I can be reached by phone (406-555-0103) or by e-mail (calvinj@email.com).

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Calvin James

Calvin James

Use black or blue ink for your signature.
Type your name below your signature.

The first paragraph should state your reason for writing, the position you are applying for, and how you heard of the job opening. This information will not be in your résumé and may be of interest to your reader.

Explain why you are the right person for the job. This is a good opportunity to elaborate on the information in your résumé.

Mention that your résumé is enclosed, and be sure to ask for an interview. Give the employer at least one way to reach you.

When applying for a job for which you have little or no professional experience, focus on your education or the skills that would make you a good candidate for the job.

Alice Abbad
1929 Caidon Street
Town, Iowa 55555
(967) 555-0198
aliceab@email.com

June 17, 2011

Include the date that the letter is being sent.

Ms. Janelle Stevens
92.1 FM
92 Queen Street
Town, Iowa 55555

Dear Ms. Stevens:

Use a formal greeting.

I would like to express my interest in an entry-level position with 92.1 FM. I am a recent graduate with a degree in broadcast journalism, and I am interested in working for a station that I greatly respect.

I have a clear, confident voice and a passion for current events. I have a history of learning quickly and working well within a team. I would be glad to share my portfolio with you, which showcases some broadcasting projects I completed in college.

During my senior year in college, I was selected for a prestigious broadcast internship with 101.9 FM. There I became acquainted with the processes and protocols of working in a radio station.

Please review my enclosed résumé. I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you in person about the positive contributions I can make to the 92.1 FM team. I can be reached any time by phone (967-555-0198) or e-mail (aliceab@email.com).

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Alice Abbad

Alice Abbad

Mention your enclosed résumé. Let employers know that you would like to meet with them. Make it as convenient as possible for them to contact you.

Cover letters do not always have to be sent in response to job postings. It is often a good idea to contact potential employers and let them know you would like to work for them.

When you have no relevant professional experience, highlight your education, special skills, personal traits, and any non-paid experience you might have.

Chronological Résumé

A chronological résumé describes your work history in reverse chronological order, listing recent experiences first. This makes it easy for prospective employers to see how your skills and career have developed over time. A chronological résumé is easy to follow and write. However, it can also draw attention to any significant gaps in your employment.

David C. Mikowitz
211 West Jefferson Street
Town, Pennsylvania 55555
(322) 555-1043
dcmiko@email.com

List your name and contact information at the top of the résumé.

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a technical support position, with a special focus on customer service, that will take advantage of my computer and network knowledge and my strong interpersonal skills

Briefly describe the kind of position you are seeking, and highlight your most impressive skills.

EXPERIENCE

Telephone Support Specialist 2007–present
Firefly Cable Company Town, Pennsylvania

- Provide thorough and courteous customer support over the telephone for multiple-user platforms and operating systems
- Assist management in developing a training system for new hires
- Consistently beat internal goals for customer satisfaction and amount of time per call

Describe your most recent work experience first.

Assistant Information Technology Specialist 2006–2007
Galaxy Publishing Town, Pennsylvania

- Evaluated and solved individual employee computer issues
- Wrote company handbook for technological support
- Assisted senior staff in troubleshooting internal network issues

Use action words to describe your responsibilities and accomplishments.

EDUCATION

Town Community College Town, Pennsylvania
2003–2005 Associate's Degree: Computer Science

Central High School Town, Pennsylvania
Graduated 2003

Include any certifications that may be relevant to the position.

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Computer Systems Administrator, 2008

REFERENCES

Available upon request

Functional Résumé

A functional résumé uses headings to highlight your skills and qualifications. Functional résumés are good to use if you want to de-emphasize gaps in your work history or if you have worked briefly for multiple employers. They are also good to use if you are changing careers and want to focus on your skills that can transfer from one job to another, such as the ability to organize, to work with people, or to use computers.

Lorenzo A. Rivera
823 17th Street
Town, Arkansas 55555
(501) 555-1092
lorenzor@email.com

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE

Experienced and dependable worker with own truck and tools looking for maintenance or construction work

SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Framing and Roofing

- Ten years of experience in all aspects of commercial and residential construction
- Construct wood and metal frames
- Build and repair shingle, rubber, and steel roofs

Electrical Work and Plumbing

- Install and repair electrical systems in commercial and residential buildings
- Install toilets, sinks, and showers
- Reroute existing piping

Painting

- Fifteen years of experience painting interiors and exteriors
- Excel at brush, roll, and spray painting, as well as detailed finish work

EDUCATION

Plumbing Certification

High School Diploma

Central High School, Town, Arkansas

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Standard Construction Company
City, Arkansas

1999-2009

Able Painting
City, Arkansas

1980-1995

REFERENCES

Available upon request

Use headings to identify groups of skills.

Use action verbs to emphasize your skills and experiences.

Do not include a graduation date if you are concerned about age discrimination.

Modified Chronological Résumé

A modified chronological résumé combines the chronological and functional résumé styles. It is a good choice if you want to group similar skills together and you do not need to de-emphasize gaps in your employment history. Grouping similar skills together allows you to move important experiences to the top of your résumé even if the experiences are not recent.

Andrea Kim

1822 Read Street, Town, Oregon 55555 akim@email.com (971) 555-1033

OBJECTIVE

Computer-savvy office worker with a positive attitude seeks a clerical position to utilize strong organizational and interpersonal skills.

COMPUTER SKILLS

Administrative Assistant, Clearwater Agencies January 2008–present
Town, Oregon

- Perform tasks using word-processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software, several Internet browsers, and multiple graphic software programs
- Research, implement, and maintain revised structure for company database
- Train new employees on use of computer systems and software

Office Assistant, Systems Inc. April 2006–December 2008
Town, Oregon

- Worked with a variety of operating systems, internal and external drives, and various printer configurations

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Administrative Assistant, Clearwater Agencies January 2008–present
Town, Oregon

- Reformatted company database for ease of navigation
- Created file-naming and file-archiving system
- Coordinate company events, including sending invitations, catering, and booking entertainment

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Administrative Assistant, Clearwater Agencies January 2008–present
Town, Oregon

- Interact effectively with coworkers, clients, other organizations, and vendors
- Recognized as Employee of the Month several times for outstanding interpersonal and organizational skills

Volunteer, Friends of the Library May 2005–present
Town, Oregon

- Assist head librarian with community outreach program
- Gathered signatures for successful proposal to increase library hours

EDUCATION

Diploma, Central High School 2006
Town, Oregon

REFERENCES

Available upon request

Briefly describe your skills, experience, relevant personality traits, and the kind of position you are seeking.

List specific skills and qualifications under more general skill headings.

List specific accomplishments.