

Cover Letter Basic Structure

Your Name
Your Address
City, State, Zip Code
Email and/or Phone

Date
Name of Employer
His / Her title
Company / Organization Name
Street address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr. _____

Opening paragraph: Attract attention. State the reason for writing, naming the position or type of work for which applying. Identify how you heard of the opening or how the employer's name was obtained (e.g., Dr. Smith in the Sociology Dept. at Santa Clara University recommended that I contact you).

Second paragraph: State the reason for writing to this particular employer (i.e., why you are interested in working for this employer). Specify concrete reasons for the type of work you desire, your goals, and how your education, experiences and other personal qualifications will support your capacity to succeed in the work for which you're applying. A description of significant accomplishments can be made, but the resume should not be repeated any more than absolutely necessary. Basically, you are emphasizing your key qualifications, selling yourself and elaborating on background areas which will attract a specific employer for the specific field of work or job in which you're interested. If the second paragraph is too long, break it into two paragraphs.

Closing paragraph: Purpose is to get an interview. An appropriate request can be made several ways: offer to call the firm on a specific date to arrange for an interview; ask for an appointment during a particular period of time when you will be visiting the city in which the employer is located; offer some similar suggestion to facilitate an immediate and favorable reply (e.g., "Since we are several hundred miles apart, would it be possible for me to schedule an interview with any of your salesmen in this region?"). Include your phone number and/or E-mail address to be contacted. Close with a thank you.

Sincerely,

Your name typed