

Four Steps to a Fabulous COVER LETTER

#1

Pre-Work

Review the job description closely and circle keywords or phrases that resonate with you. Compare the circled skills and keywords to accomplishments or responsibilities found on your resume. This will help you find direct examples of actions or achievements that prove you are qualified for this role; these are the experiences to focus on.



Find a personal connection with the organization's mission, culture, industry, or leadership. You can look on the company's website, visit www.glassdoor.com, Vault, BuckyNet, LinkedIn, and many other places to learn what the company values and who it serves. This will help you articulate why you want to work there.



#3

Write it Out

Put your pre-work into action and write it out! Utilize this framework for your paragraphs:

INTRO: Who are you, and why are you interested in the position? How did you learn about the role? What do you know about the company that makes you believe you're a good fit?

BODY: Choose 1-2 specific experiences you've had and connect them to the skills or responsibilities found in the position description. Relate your past accomplishments to this future role. Emphasize what you have to offer versus what you hope to gain.

CLOSING: Restate your interest in a new way and summarize why you are a good fit for the company and the role. Provide a strong closing that includes how best to contact you.

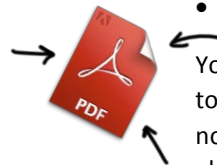
Pay attention to flow, tense, tone, and transitions. The first cover letter is the most difficult to write, but you'll get better with practice. The goal is for your message to stick with the recruiter, so make it easy to follow and hard to forget.

#2

Format

You've done your research. Now it's time to outline your letter. Your letter should follow a business letter format (single-spaced, block paragraphs, with no indentations) and include these components:

- Your Resume Header
- The Date
- Company Address
- Salutation
- Opening Paragraph
- 1-2 Body Paragraphs
- Closing Paragraph
- Signature



Your cover letter will most likely include only 3-4 total paragraphs. Like your resume, it should be no more than one page in length. Begin thinking about the content and stories you'll include in each section.

Use a professional and easy-to-read font (ideally the same one used for your resume). Calibri and Times New Roman are both safe options. Additionally, be sure to always save your final version as a PDF to preserve your formatting.

#4

Check the List

Now that you've done the hard part, double-check to ensure that you have included all of the most important components for an awesome cover letter.

Review the next page for a helpful checklist and make certain that your cover letter really speaks to the recruiter and effectively presents your candidacy for the position.



Cover Letter

CHECKLIST

Is your cover letter awesome? If you can check all of these boxes, it probably is.

- Business letter format has been followed (as described on the previous page).
- Why you're interested in the position and why you're a strong match for the company.
- Connection between your relevant skills and accomplishments to the requirements of the position description.
- Additional skills or qualities you will bring to the position and the organization; what value are you adding to the team?
- Your cover letter is not a duplicate of your resume (you didn't reference every experience), but instead discussed 1-2 relevant stories.