Definition

A cover letter is an essay explaining your strengths, achievements, and interest in a specific position or graduate program. It identifies your preparation for the position, knowledge of the discipline, and future goals in the field. This document is always attached to the resume and given the employer before a job interview or submitted with a graduate school application.

How to Create a Cover Letter

Heading: Format as a Business Letter and include the following on the top left:
- Employer or University Information: name of institution and address
- Date
- Salutation: “Dear” Specific Person or “To Whom it May Concern”

Introduction:
- Explain your interest in the position or graduate program
- Mention how you learned about the position
- Introduce your background and history: education and work experience
- Express your enthusiasm and the reasons for your application

Body
- Link the program or position’s descriptions with your own expertise
- Mention any specific individuals or projects you’d like to work
- Identify the reasons you chose the company, university, or employer; how do they fit with your own needs and wishes?
- Summarize your talents, experiences, and achievements more in-depth. Highlight specific aspects of your history that prepare you to excel at this post.
- Emphasize how your achievements and skills can benefit the employer/company

Closing
- Identify the ways this position or grad program will assist you in your future goals.
- Thank the employer for taking the time and consideration in reading your letter
- Use an appropriate closing (ie. Sincerely,) and mention that resume is enclosed
- Leave 5 spaces to sign your name, and be sure to type your first and last name

Cover Letter Tips & Tricks
- Do not go below a 12 point font, Time Roman font
- Keep all paragraphs left aligned
- Make sure margins are 1” all around
- Check for spelling and formatting errors.
Richard Green, Hiring Manager  
Dayjob Ltd  
120 Vyse Street  
Birmingham, AL  

10 February 2016  

Dear Mr. Green,  

I am writing to apply for the entry level accounting position with your company. After reading about the job description on your company website I was thrilled to discover that all the requirements you need from applicants precisely meet my academic achievements and work experience. My 10 years of experience in this field and my undergraduate degree in Business from the University of California, Santa Cruz prepare me well for the responsibilities of this post.  

I would also like to add that I am not only attracted to this vacancy by its highly competitive salary & superb benefits package, but also by your company outstanding reputation in the industry. Specifically, the company’s focus on new technologies.  

For the last year, I have been working as an Accounts Assistant in the sales department of a major trading company. In this role I have had to perform monthly currency revaluations, oversee weekly payment runs and also ensure payment approvals are obtained and installments made. All of these tasks require attention to detail under the pressure of tight deadlines.  

Having attained most of the career goals that I have previously set myself, I am now keen to expand my professional ability and to seek new challenges in the field of accounting. I completed my Accountancy Degree with distinction and am greatly excited by the prospect of being able to use this knowledge, along with my natural passion for number crunching, to become a valuable member of your team.  

I strongly believe that I have all the qualities you require for the mentioned post, and can assure you that I possess all the abilities needed for the accounting sector. In conclusion I want to state that I would be very grateful for a chance to prove myself, and look forward to meeting you to discuss possible my application further.  

Sincerely,  

(sign here)  

John Smith  
120 Made Up Street  
Birmingham, AL  
jsmith@yahoo.com