

Cover Letter Workshop

Senior Seminar (Bio 499)
Dr. Barbeau, 2021

See course webpage for helpful
Links and example cover letters.



Purpose of Cover Letter

A well written cover letter (personal statement) should accompany every letter of resume to provide info. on your skills and experience.

A cover letter is your first chance to make a good impression. It helps convince an employer or acceptance committee to look at your resume and other materials, and hopefully land an interview.



Your Audience

Employers or entrance committees likely view hundreds (or more) applications. The cover letter is a chance to sell yourself, stand out, and *convince* them that you are a good candidate.

A cover letter is your 1st chance to make

- a good impression.
- an employer or acceptance committee want to find out more
- an opportunity for an interview.

First Paragraph – Do's!

Why are you writing

- Mention specific job /program you are applying for.
- Where you found the listing

- **Why** you want to work for that company, or why you want to be in that program.

- Explain **what you can do** for the employer, or what you have to offer a program.

- Be straightforward

- Be confident in your abilities.

Ex. I am the ideal candidate for this position...

Ex. I am a hard working, self-motivated individual...

Ex. I am a good candidate for your program because ...



First Paragraph – Don'ts!



Don't

State what you expect the position to do for you

Avoid

Ex. This position will allow me to move to a new town.

Ex. I hear the pay for this position is great.

Ex. I would like a 9 – 5 job so I can do other things on the weekends.

Ex. I've always wanted to live here.

Second Paragraph – Dos!



Do

- **Explain** the most relevant skills & experiences listed on your resume. (Don't cut and paste! Expand a little.)
- **Explain How** you've earned the skills
- **Explain Why** these skills will help the employer

Don'ts

- Copy your resume onto the cover letter
- Over-qualify yourself with too many skills
- List skills not related to the position



Third Paragraph – Get an Interview!



State the following:

- Indicate that the resume or other material are also attached.
- State that you will be contacting the employer for an interview, or will be available for an interview at a certain date.

Final Line – Thank You!

Thank the employer for their consideration and time spent reviewing your application



Your Address
City, State Zip

The Date

Letter Recipient's Name
Recipient's Title
Company Name
Company Address

Dear Mr. or Mrs.

~ 3Paragraphs with info about you...

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten Signature
Your Name Typed

Format for hard-copy letter:

The Date

Letter Recipient's Name
Recipient's Title
Company Name
Company Address

Dear Mr. or Mrs.

~ 3Paragraphs with info about you...

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name Typed
Your Address
City, State Zip

Format for email letter:

Overall Tips



Do

- Reflect a positive attitude
- Try to keep the cover letter to one page
- Tailor your cover letter to the job, position, or program
- Use spell check
- Keep sentences clear and simple
- Alternate sentence length to hold the reader's interest.



Overall Tips



Don't



- Use a generic cover letter for all employers
- Start every sentence with "I..."
- Announce weaknesses
- Include an autobiography

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