

Norman Career Services

Why do I need a cover letter?

A cover letter is your opportunity to tell an employer why you are a great fit for the position. It should be personal and customized to each job like a thank you note. They are typically three paragraphs long (no more than four), and are a great way to demonstrate your written communication skills to the organization.

What if they don't read it?

Some employers don't request a cover letter. That does not mean you shouldn't write one.

Having a personal cover letter shows initiative and gives you an extra chance to explain how very qualified you are to an employer.

Don't miss the opportunity to tell them why you are so great!

How do I send a digital cover letter?

1) If you are sending an email to a general inbox, attach the cover letter as a .doc or .pdf file with your resume.

2) When emailing the hiring manager directly, use your cover letter as the body of the email.

3) Sometimes employers ask for applications online.

- Upload your cover letter as an additional .doc or .pdf after your resume is uploaded.
- Other additional documents you might upload are a list of references, transcripts, or letter of reference.

*Always request a "read receipt" before sending an email application so you get confirmation that the email message went through.

Cover Letter Checklist

Before you write your letter, here are some details you need to have on hand:

Personal Information

- Name
- Address/Email address
- Cell/home phone number

Employer Information

- Hiring manager's name
- Mailing address

Position Details

- Desired job title
- Name of organization
- Job description

Personal Description

- Reason you are interested in job
- Key terms to describe yourself
- 2-3 relevant work examples

DON'T FORGET

- Explain why your past experience applies to the new job.
- Mix up your sentences so they do not all start with "I."
- Match the style/format of your resume at the top of the page.
- ALWAYS thank the reader for taking the time to consider you.

T. GOLDEN SUN

1605 Coliseum Dr., Russellville, AR 72801, 479.968.0389, golden_sun@emailaccount.com

Your name and contact information should match your resume.

Month Day, Year

Always check to make sure the date is updated at the top of the page.

Hiring Manager Name

Organization Name

Street Address

City, State Zip

If necessary, do research online or call the employer to find out who will receive this letter

Dear Hiring Manager Name,

Try not to use "To Whom It May Concern" if possible.

Introduce yourself and state why you are writing.

List the name of anyone who referred you to apply.

Use some key terms to describe what makes you a good fit for this job.

This is your chance to explain why you are excited about the job.

Explain your value to the organization.

Describe how you will contribute. What do you bring from past experience.

Give 2-3 work experience examples/skills and explain how they apply to this job.

Close with a call to action.

Thank them for their time/consideration.

Tell them what you want to happen next.

Should they call you for a list of references?

Would you like to discuss the position further in an interview?

Should they plan for you to follow up again on a specific day?

Be sure to quantify number of years of experience or specific results you may have achieved here.

Sincerely,

It is okay to summarize your interest in the position one more time here as well.

T. Golden Sun

If you send a printed copy of the letter, be sure to sign your name in pen in this space.

Cover letters should be different for every employer. It is okay to write a basic cover letter to get you started, but be sure that you go back through and make significant changes each time to personalize it for the reader.

Consider having a friend or family member read through the letter to ensure that everything has been updated correctly. Also, be very careful to correct all spelling and punctuation errors before sending.