

Suggestions to Make Your Cover Letter Stand Out

Your cover letter gives a prospective employer a first impression of you as candidate. Use this document to stand out and invite closer inspection of your resume. Copies of sample letters are also available, but here are a few general suggestions.

PARAGRAPH 1: Why are you writing?

Always mention how you heard about the specific position and why you want to work for this particular company. Be specific. Avoid general statements like, “I heard about this position in the Career Services Office” or “I have always liked _____ Airlines.” Let the employer know that you have done your homework and have precise reasons for wanting to work for them. Never give a prospective employer the impression that you are applying for multiple positions. They may feel as if you just want a co-op, any co-op. You want to impress upon them that you want to work for them.

PARAGRAPH 2: Why should they hire you?

Detail your qualifications for the position. Remember that interviewing is a “weeding out” process. The employer already knows what they can do for you, now it is time to tell them what you can do for them. State the qualifications that make you the best candidate for the position. Refer to experiences, achievements, and education that are listed in your resume. This invites the reader to examine your resume more closely. Remember to be positive and to make the most of what you’ve done. Every position you’ve held can be used to say something about your personality, dedication, or work ethic. If you know details about the position that you’re applying for you can target certain duties and match your skills to them.

PARAGRAPH 3: The ending . . .

Conclude your letter with a statement that sums up your purpose. Usually you would want to indicate that you will contact the employer for an interview, but in the case of co-ops you should invite them to contact you.