

Cover Letter Guide

Follow these steps to produce a competitive cover letter that stands out

WHAT IS A COVER LETTER?

- A cover letter is the link between the job description and your resume. It explains why you are a good fit for the role. It connects specific examples of your experience to the skills the employer is looking for in a candidate. Focus on what you can do for the employer, not what they can do for you.

WHY WRITE A COVER LETTER?

The purpose of the cover letter is to:

- introduce yourself- while making a connection to them
- demonstrate your interest- tell why you're applying to them in a genuine way
- generate their interest- tell them how you're the right fit for the role
- draw attention to your resume- points out the highlights of your resume

BE PROFESSIONAL

- Cover letters should always be addressed to a specific person- do not use "to whom it may concern; sir; madam"- if needed, call the company to find out who to address the letter to or use the phrase "Dear Hiring Manager"
- A Cover Letter should never be more than one page and should be typed
- Use a professional font such as Calibri, Arial, Times New Roman or Garamond and size 11 or 12
- Send a PDF whenever possible to minimize conversion errors

BE ENGAGING

- Don't just repeat what's on your resume; bridge the content of your resume to the posting with specifics
- Write a different cover letter for each job you apply for, customize information for each position/ organization you are applying for, and try to demonstrate your specific qualifications for the position
- Tailor your cover letter to the needs of specific employers. It should be a direct response to the job posting and focus on the information that is most relevant to the position
- Vary your sentence structure. Do not start every sentence with "I". Consider using short personal narrative/ anecdotes to create a meaningful connection.

RESEARCH SHOWS

- Conduct company research! Research will also help you discover what the company values. Make a personal connection with any shared values and highlight this in the introduction of your cover letter
- Research similar cover letters for similar positions to get started
- Research separates the good cover letters from the generic ones

For more support, book an appointment with Career and Experiential Learning at tru.ca/cel

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TEMPLATE

Your Name (use the same header as your resume)

Your Address, Contact info (Phone Number, Email Address)

Person's Name of who is interviewing you (if available)

Company Name

Company Address

City, Province, Postal Code

Re: Identify what position you are applying for; and the job number (if there is one)

Greeting: Dear Firstname, Lastname

First Paragraph

- Capture the reader's attention and encourage them to read on!
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and why you want to work for them specifically
- Reference their mission/ reputation/accomplishments to make a positive personal connection
- A short sentence explaining the key points you make in the next paragraphs

Middle Paragraphs

- Market your skills, education, knowledge, and experience using specific quantifiable and qualitative details
- Match your qualifications with their needs based on the job posting. Give specific examples of how your strongest and relevant qualifications meet the requirements of the role
- List any key accomplishments or demonstrated skills that relate to the position
- Use short narratives to highlight personal accomplishments, projects, or passions that are relevant to the position
- Consider drawing a personal connection to the role, company or industry
- Demonstrate strong writing qualities

Last Paragraph

- Detail how the employer can get in touch with you
- Consider conveying your enthusiasm in applying while referencing your first paragraph
- Express your appreciation for their time and consideration

Closing: (sincerely/ regards/ respectfully)

Your Name, Firstname, Lastname (typed)