How to Write a Cover Letter

What is a cover letter?

- Gives explanation to your resume
- Highlights your strengths and skills for the position
- Shows the employer/reader that you tailored your resume to this specific position
- Provides a writing sample

A cover letter has four basic parts:

- Heading
- Introduction
- Argument
- Closing

**Heading:**

- Your Address
- Your Phone Number (optional)
- Your Email Address (optional)
- Date

Now, leave two lines of space. Then put the information of the person who will be reading your cover letter. Include his/her:

- Name
- Title/Position
- Address

**Introduction:**

- Address the person reading your cover letter. For example: “Dear Mr. Elmo:”
- Explain who you are and why you are writing.
- You may want to include how you found out about the position.
- Explain why you are interested in the position.
- Cover letters for scholarships will be similar to those for job positions.
- Use similar language as in the call for letters.
- If you have met the employer before, you should remind him/her where and when you met.
- Finally, include a brief sentence explaining how your goals align with the company’s goals, and why you will benefit the company.

**The Argument:**

- This is where you persuade the reader why you are a strong candidate for the position or scholarship.
• The argument needs to be strong and concise.
• Do not repeat everything that can be found on your resume for example: “When I worked at Food Lion, I used to stock the shelves, run the cash register, and greet people when they entered.” – This information is redundant.
• Be short, sweet, and to the point. Don’t clutter your letter with too many details about your past or any skills.
• You need to show the reader that you possess the perfect skills for the position, convince the reader that you will be an asset to the company, why the employer should hire you, and how he/she will benefit from your employment.
• If applying for a scholarship, this section should show the scholarship committee why you are the perfect recipient for the scholarship. Show the reader why, or how, you meet all of the requirements and are the most worthy recipient. However, do not overdo it. You need to back up the description of yourself with reasoning or examples.

The Closing:
• The closing restates your main points and reiterates the fact that your skills match the job description.
• Inform the reader when you will contact them; give the reader your contact information (phone number and email address), and thank the reader for reviewing your application.
• If applying for a scholarship, your conclusion will be similar. The only difference is that you will not specifically say when you will contact the scholarship committee because they should contact you.

Signature:
• When signing your cover letter, use a simple closing like “Sincerely,”
• Leave four lines of space.
• Type your full name.
• Underneath your name, write “Enclosed: Resume,” if you have included a resume with your cover letter.
• After printing, sign your name in between closing and printed full name. Use blue or black ink only—never pencil.
Lola Piggy  
Company Executive Officer  
Cortez Cruise Lines  
123 Cruise Line Drive  
Boone, NC 28608

Dear Ms. Piggy:

I am writing to apply for the position of Disability Coordinator at Cortez Cruise Lines. My academic work and life experience dealing with special needs has prepared me for the position of Disability Coordinator.

Currently, I work with a company, A Small Miracle, which provides one-on-one services for children and adults with Autism. I work with a child who is nonverbal, and it is my responsibility to work with him on goals that lead to his independence. I create plans for the day that suit his needs and help him to be successful. Also, the child has a very particular diet and cannot eat many foods, so I prepare his lunch and snacks every day accordingly in order to prevent stomach problems. I am prepared to use the organizational and hands-on skills I learned in this job and put both to use at Cortez Cruise Lines.

In my academic career, I have done extensive research in Universal Design and laws and facts on disabilities. Also, I have undergone specialized training in the area of Disability Services. I have created plans for a writing center using Universal Design. I am quite familiar with the Americans with Disabilities Act in respect to guests and staff. I will bring the knowledge of Universal Design and the ADA to Cortez Cruise Lines. Using this knowledge, I will help Cortez Cruise Lines become ADA compliant and maintain a professional environment for staff and guests.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have and would love to meet with you to discuss my resume at your convenience. Please feel free to contact me at (866) 867-5309 should you need any additional information or if you have questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Enclosed: resume