A cover letter is a formal letter included with your resume. It introduces you to the employer and explains your interest in the job and/or company. It gives information about you that a resume can’t, like explaining why your unique set of skills and personal strengths make you the right person for the job. A cover letter can also demonstrate your writing skills and show a bit more personality than your resume. You should always send a cover letter UNLESS the job posting says not to.

A cover letter should:

- Contain 3 paragraphs
- Express excitement for the job
- Show some knowledge of the company you are applying to (what interests you)
- Show how your skills and personal strengths match what the employer needs
- Reflect your everyday language (and be professional/respectful)
- Thank the employer
- Address availability or additional requirements mentioned in the job posting
- Use correct spelling and grammar

Tips for cover letter formatting:

- 1” wide margins
- Contact information heading from your resume
- Use a professional, readable font (e.g. Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri) that is the same as your resume font
- Paragraphs should be less than ½ the page, entire cover letter 1 page only

In an electronic application, you need to either attach your cover letter OR make your email the cover letter. If you want to make the email your cover letter, start with the greeting and limit to 1 paragraph about the position you’re applying for, why you’re interested, and how your skills are a great match. Mention that your resume is attached.
Names/Addresses/Date

The contact information section from your resume goes at the top of the cover letter. Then align the date, employer’s name and position (if available), and company name and address to the left of the page. A job posting ID or reference number goes after the company’s address. (see sample at end).

Greeting: Address Your Cover Letter to a Person or Job Title

Start your greeting with “To” or “Dear”. Use appropriate titles such as Mr., Ms., Dr., if the name is given (e.g. Dear Mr. Brown, Dear Ms. Jensen). If you are unsure about whether the person is a man or woman, write the employer’s full name (e.g. Dear Alex Jones). If no name is given in the job posting, try searching the company website or calling to find out who will be reviewing the applications.

Otherwise, use a job title (Dear Hiring Manager, Hiring Director, Company Name Representative) or a generic title of the most likely reviewer (Dear Salon Owner, Dear Chef). If it’s a large business with a human resources department, you can say Dear Human Resources. Avoid using “To Whom It May Concern” or “Dear Sir/Madam”.

Paragraph 1: Introduction

- State what job position you are applying for
- State how you found out about the position (e.g. website, LinkedIn, personal contact)
- Say what interests you about the company
- Briefly say why you are a good match for the position (optional)

Paragraph 2: Body (You can also use two smaller body paragraphs)

- Highlight 2 to 3 of your most important skills, experiences, education or achievements that make you a great fit for the position
- Give a one sentence example of using your skills and/or personal characteristics
- Tell the employer how you can benefit the company

Paragraph 3: Closing

- If the job posting asks about particular availability, willingness to relocate, work at multiple locations, having your own car – make sure to address these
- Express your interest in an interview and tell the employer how to contact you
- Thank the employer for their consideration or time
A cover letter should be written in your own words and tone, but here are some sample sentences to help you write your own cover letter.

**Suggestions for Introductory Paragraph**

- I was excited to see your posting for **job title** on **website**.
- I am excited to apply for the **job title** position at **Company Name**.
- I’m very interested in a career at **Company Name** and am applying for the **job title** position.
- I’m eager to join the **Company Name** team, which is known for…
- One thing I admire about **Company Name** is…
- As a recent graduate with **skills** (list 2-3), I’m an excellent fit for this position.
- My **skills** (list 2-3) and background align with the requirements of your position and I’m confident I can contribute to the success of **Company Name**.
- My qualifications for this position include **skills** (list 2-3).

**Suggestions for Body Paragraph(s)**

- During my time at **College/University name**, I …
- As you’ll see in my resume, …
- During my **practicum/preceptorship**, I gained hands-on experience in …
- My work as **previous job title** required **skill**; for example, when I …
- The **skill** required to do **job title** has assisted me in many ways. For example, …
- My previous success in **job title/practical work experience** has proven my **ability/skill**.
- I’ve been **awarded** (recognized, selected for) …

**Suggestions for Closing Paragraph**

- I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and discuss how I could contribute to **Company Name**.
- I would appreciate the opportunity to learn more about this position and how I can benefit your organization.
- You can reach me by phone at **phone number** or email me at **email address**.
- Please feel free to contact me at either the phone number or email address listed at the top.
- As mentioned in your job posting, I am available ________.
- I look forward to hearing from you.
- Thank you for your time and consideration.
- Thanks so much for your consideration.
June 9, 2019

Mark’s Moving Company
607 Youngman Road
Ottawa, Ontario N1G 7K4

Re: Job Posting 22532

Dear Hiring Manager:

I am writing to apply for the full-time receptionist position posted on Workopolis. I am excited to contribute to a team who values professionalism and customer service as strongly as I do. My skills and experience are an excellent match for Mark’s Moving Company’s needs.

Firstly, my recent office assistant training at Vancouver Community College has prepared me to use the most up-to-date and efficient office management tools. I have strong organizational abilities and attention to detail to keep your office running smoothly, as demonstrated by my volunteer work organizing social events for seniors.

Secondly, my experience at Chico’s taught me how to resolve customer complaints calmly and to the customer’s satisfaction. Customers responded positively to my friendly, respectful service style. Finally, I’m a hard worker who always takes initiative to get things done.

I look forward to speaking with you about this opportunity at your earliest convenience. As mentioned in your posting, I’m available to start work immediately. You can reach me by phone or e-mail as listed at the top. Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Perez