



What's in a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is an introduction to you and your resume. It explains why you are the best candidate for the position by highlighting your skills and experiences that directly relate to the employers desired qualifications.

Create a **customized** letter that focuses on the position and what you can do for the company. You can do this by...

- ✓ Tailoring your cover letter to the job (specifically name the position and company at least at least once in your letter)
- ✓ Incorporating similar phrases/wording from the job description into your cover letter
- ✓ Researching the company to learn more about their interests, needs, values, and goals

A well-written cover letter is **organized** and **visually** appealing. Make a good impression by...

- ✓ Using the same formatting including header, font, and font sizes as your resume and reference sheet
- ✓ Following the sample block style format. Your cover letter should be at least 3 paragraphs long.
- ✓ Being professional and writing in a formal manner: be concise, relevant, and accurate
- ✓ Always addressing your cover letter to a specific person at the organization. Do not use "To Whom it May Concern"; Contact the organization to ensure the correct contact if necessary
- ✓ Including a thank you, your contact information, and a request to discuss the position
- ✓ Keeping your cover letter to a maximum of one page

Your cover letter content should provide specific **examples** that support the information highlighted in your resume. Do this by...

- ✓ Avoiding repetitive language from your resume. Instead expanded on skills with examples from your education, work, or other experiences
- ✓ Being specific and avoiding generic language ("I am organized."; "I like working on a team")
- ✓ Providing details on why you want to work with the company, why you fit with the company, and how you qualify
- ✓ Grabbing the employers attention by showing your personality, enthusiasm, interest, and intellect

Finally, **review** your cover letter to make sure you are selling yourself and showing that you are the most qualified candidate for the position. Do this by...

- ✓ Being yourself and ensuring you wrote a letter that is a reflection of you and written in your words
- ✓ Proofreading your cover letter to make sure it is error free. Bring your cover letter to the DMACC Career Center so they can review your content and double check for spelling and/or grammar errors.

The DMACC Career Center is here to help you!

DMACC Career Center | Ankeny Campus, Building I

Hours: Monday — Friday | 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Appointments: (515) 964 - 6200; Dial "0"

Email: careers@dmacc.edu

Phone: (515) 964 - 6463



Jane Doe

1234 Main Street, Somewhere, Iowa 5xxxx | Phone: 555-555-5555 | Email: janedoe@email.com

Date

Contact Person's Name
Contact Person's Title
Company/Organization
Company street address
Company city, state, zip

Dear _____: (e.g. "Dear Mr. Smith:" or "Dear Ms. Jones:"; if contact person is unknown, write, "Dear Hiring Manager:")

Paragraph One: Why You Are Writing

Include two or three sentences stating what job you are applying for, how you learned about it, any personal contacts you have in the company and your general qualifications for the job.

Paragraph Two/Body of the Letter: What You Have to Offer

One to three paragraphs (based on space and qualifications) containing information that expands on your qualifications; discuss the most relevant details of your experience and education; be specific and thorough; relate these points to how they would benefit the company.

Paragraph Three/Conclusion: How You Will Follow Up

Close by requesting a time to further discuss the position and your qualifications; provide your basic contact information (email or phone number); close by thanking the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely, (avoid yours truly, your friend, etc.)

(Your signature if submitting a paper copy—sign with blue or black ink)

Your name