

What is a Cover Letter?

Whenever you send a resume in the mail to a potential employer, it should ALWAYS be accompanied with a cover letter. A cover letter explains the following to the reader:

- WHY** you are sending your resume to that person. This is an excellent opportunity to state your job objective, and you can tailor it to that specific job opening.
- WHERE** you learned of the job opening. If you are responding to a newspaper ad, state the name of the paper and the date of the issue. If a person referred you, mention the name of the person.
- WHAT** you can do. Explain some of your skills that might be of interest and that would benefit the employer. You might choose to elaborate on a certain portion of your resume. If you are responding to an ad, make sure you *address how you meet the needs that are indicated*.
- WHO** you are. Explain your current status. Examples would be: will be “graduating in June” or “recently graduated from high school.”
- HOW** you can be reached should the reader wish to contact you for more information.

Tips for Writing Cover Letters

- ❖ Address the cover letter to the person (name and title) who could hire you.
- ❖ Show that you know a little about the company.
- ❖ Express your interest and enthusiasm.
- ❖ Project warmth and friendliness while still being professional.
- ❖ Be specific about what you are asking for and what you are offering.
- ❖ Support, but don't repeat, what is on your resume.
- ❖ Keep it focused on your job qualifications and the hiring criteria in the ad.
- ❖ Take the initiative about the next step whenever possible and be specific.
- ❖ Keep it brief – 3-4 paragraphs on one page. Keep it short, positive, and to the point.
- ❖ Each cover letter you write should be unique to the position you're applying for.
- ❖ Make sure that the spelling of all names, titles, and company are correct.
- ❖ Sign your letter in black or blue ink.
- ❖ Proofread your cover letter – twice!