

Cover Letter Worksheet

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Think of a job description as an advertisement – it tells you who a company is looking for. Your cover letter is a one page response clearly stating why YOU are the person they’re looking for.

Cover letters should be customized for each job you’re applying to. Before you start writing a cover letter, read the job description carefully and extract the experience and skill requirements listed. Then think about how your past experiences and skills can meet those requirements. It’s okay if they don’t match exactly. You just need to be able to explain how they will transfer to this new role. Feel free to use the table below to organize your thoughts.

| | 1. What does it say in the job description? | 2. How can you meet the requirement with your experiences/skills? |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Experience Required | | |
| Skills Required | | |
| Repeated Keywords/ Phrases | | |

Now that you’ve internalized the job description, follow these steps to write your cover letter:

STEP 1: Date your cover letter.

STEP 2: Address your cover letter to the hiring manager (preferably by name) followed by the company name and address. Sometimes the job posting lists the hiring manager’s name. Otherwise, do some research on the company website or LinkedIn.

STEP 3: Your opening paragraph should consist of 2-3 sentences where you mention the job title you’re applying for and explain **why** you want this position at this company. This will show that you’ve done your research and are genuinely interested.

STEP 4: Your body paragraph should consist of 3-4 sentences that tell a story about how your experiences and skills make you a great fit for this position. This paragraph should tell the hiring manager something they wouldn’t learn from glancing at your resume. Before you begin, study the job description. What keywords/phrases are mentioned higher up in the job description? What keywords/phrases are mentioned more than once? Focus on one or two stories that demonstrate the skills they are looking for. Be specific by using examples and numbers.

STEP 5: Your closing paragraph should consist of 2-3 sentences where you **summarize** why you want this job and how you are a great fit. If you’re changing careers, this is a good place to clarify what transferable skills you have.

STEP 6: Sign off professionally.

STEP 7: Proofread your cover letter. One way to approach this is by setting it aside for a few hours or even a day then looking at it with fresh eyes. Another approach is to send your cover letter to someone else to look at it for you. If you're applying for multiple jobs at a time, make sure you've mentioned the right company throughout your cover letter!

Check out Indeed's user-friendly [cover letter samples](#). Once you click on a specific job title, you'll see a sample cover letter with the option to download it as a template. This resource is perfect for visual learners and people who aren't sure how to customize their cover letter to fit a new/different job description.