



Heritage College & Seminary Cover Letter Guide

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is a document that accompanies your resume when you are applying for jobs. It allows you to expand upon the skills in your resume and connect your resume with the job you are applying to in tangible and specific ways.

You should always include a cover letter when submitting your resume unless the job description says otherwise.

Employers are looking for several things while reading your cover letter:

- Enthusiasm about the company and role
- Demonstrated experience that relates to the position
- A well-written letter that is specific to the company and job (no generic templates!)
- Proof that you can do the job

A cover letter should be maximum one page and should include several important sections that will be described below.

The Parts of a Cover Letter: Heading

Main Components:

- Include the same header (with your name, contact info, etc.) as your resume.
 - Your cover letter and resume should look like they belong together.
- Below your heading, on the left side, write out the employer's information, including his/her name, the company name, and the address.
- Include the date that you are sending the letter.

Try as best as you can to find a specific person to address the letter to. Search the job description, company website, or LinkedIn to discern who the supervisor of that role would be. If you cannot find a name, use “Hiring Manager” or “Hiring Team”. **Do not use** “To whom it may concern”. Follow these instructions for the salutation as well.

The Parts of a Cover Letter: Introduction

Main Components:

- Introduce yourself, your education, and current role (if applicable).
- State the role you are applying for.
- Briefly highlight why you’d be good for the position and why you are applying.
- Mention a mutual contact (if applicable).
- Get the employer’s attention!

In the introduction paragraph, you want to be clear about why you are applying for the position and get the employer’s attention so that they want to keep reading and, ultimately, invite you for an interview. If you have any personal connection to the company or have using their services/ participated in their events, etc., add it here.

The Parts of a Cover Letter: Body

Main Components:

- Expand upon the highlights in the introduction.
- Share past jobs or experiences and how they have prepared you for this role.
 - Be as specific as you can with stories or accomplishments that will correlate to the position you are applying for.
- List some skills you have that will help you in this position.

- Make it obvious that you have done your research on the company/ organization.

The body of your letter should be 1-2 paragraphs.

This section should complement your resume and provide additional insight into why your experiences and qualifications make you a perfect candidate for the role.

Do not just repeat your resume! Take relevant experience from your resume and bring it to life by explaining exactly how it can correlate to the position. Make sure to look over the job description and use key words and themes in your letter.

The cover letter is where you can show the employer your personality. Give them an insight into who you are both as a person and an employee.

The Parts of a Cover Letter: Conclusion

Main Components:

- Reiterate your interest in the position and the skills that qualify you.
- State that your resume is attached.
- Thank the employer for their consideration.
- Close by letting the employer know when you will follow up, or simply state that you are looking forward to hearing from him/her soon.
- Include both a signature (physical or digital) and your typed name.

It is very important that the last paragraph is a strong closing that wraps up your letter in a succinct, professional, and compelling way.

Other Tips

- Do not ramble! Make sure the information is succinct and relevant.

- Write your cover letter single-spaced and ensure there are smooth transitions between points and paragraphs.
- If you are sending your resume as an email, you may choose to write your “cover letter” as the body of the email. This is a less formal approach and should only be used in specific situations. If you are unsure, err on the side of caution and attach both your cover letter and resume as PDFs.
- Focus on what you can/will do for the company/organization, not vice versa (note that this may be more difficult if you are applying for an internship).

Next Steps

Check out the cover letter samples that are available on our website.

If you have questions, please visit Student Services.