

COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

The purpose of a cover letter is to capture the reader's attention. It should convey why you are interested in the company (especially if you are interested in a specific position) and emphasize the three or four characteristics of your candidacy that you feel make you an exceptional candidate. As with most correspondences, a lengthy cover letter is not necessarily better. Strive to write in a concise and direct manner. Remember that your goal is to capture the reader's attention and make a good first impression.

Print your cover letter on the same paper that you use to print your resume. The letter should have one-inch top, left and right margins. A double space should separate paragraphs. The entire text should be left justified. Spelling and grammatical errors are completely unacceptable.

Below is an appropriate format:

Your Street Address, Apartment #
Your City, State Zip
Date

Contact's Name (*When known*)
Contact's Title (*When known*)
Contact's Department (*When known*)
Company Name (*When known*)
Company Street Address, Suite # (*When known*)
Company City, State Zip (*When known*)

Dear Ms./Mr./Dr. CONTACT LAST NAME: (*To Whom It May Concern: is also appropriate when the contact name unknown*)

The first paragraph tells why you are contacting the person, then either mentions your connection with that person or tells where you read about the job. Next, wow them with your researched knowledge of the company if something relevant is available. The goal: demonstrating that you are a worthy applicant, and enticing them to read further.

The second and optional third paragraph tell more about yourself, particularly why you are an ideal match for the job by summarizing why you are an ideal candidate for this position. When writing two paragraphs, the first paragraph discusses your educational experiences and how they relate to the position. This is also an opportunity to clarify anything unclear or elaborate upon something relevant that appears on your resume.

The optional third paragraph is for you to elaborate upon relevant work experience and how it relates to the new position. Split educational and relevant experiences if your second paragraph is over six lines.

The last paragraph is your goodbye. Thank the reader for his or her time. Include that you look forward to their reply and provide them with telephone and email contact information.

Sincerely,

Your Signature (This is only necessary if you are able to sign the document)

Your name typed out

Sample Cover Letter

7400 Bay Road
University Center, MI
January 24, 2007

Ms. Stephanie Sheppard
Recruiting Specialist
Pacific Financial Corporation
1120 Stillwell Avenue, Suite 211C
Troy, MI 48084

Dear Ms. Sheppard:

Please consider my enclosed resume as my application to the Financial Planner position with Pacific Financial Corporation. I learned of this opportunity while visiting your company's website. The opportunity to work for a multinational corporation that emphasizes community development and cultivates a team environment is very exciting.

My enclosed resume outlines my educational and professional experience. During my internship with Sujkowski, Major, and Hellebuyck, I learned to thrive in a fast-paced environment. An important lesson for me during that experience was that when each team member is motivated to do his or her best to support each other, great challenges become exciting instead of daunting. Our team not only met our division's output goals, but also received recognition for our high level of accuracy. I look forward to joining the Pacific Financial Corporation team and contributing to its success.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I would like to schedule a personal interview. Please contact me at 989.964.4954 or at careers@svsu.edu.

Sincerely,

Leave space to sign only if a signature is possible

Joseph Jobseeker