

## Ten Helpful Tips on What to Include in a Cover Letter

A cover letter is both a **business document** and a **piece of art**. The letter should look good and read well, and it should tell the employer what you have to offer the company. The employer isn't interested in hiring someone just because they have career dreams. They want to find the best person for the job and someone who can help the business become more profitable or can make the organization better able to fulfill its mission and vision.

Following are some helpful tips to make your cover letter more effective which means more attention getting:

1. Use the same paper and font for the cover letter as that used for the resume so your submission is visually appealing. The documents will also look more **professional**.
2. Address the letter to a **specific person** and don't use "To Whom It May Concern" or "Dear Sir or Ms." A generic address indicates you couldn't be bothered to do any research on the company to find the names of the person(s) who will be deciding if your cover letter and resume indicate an interview is in order.
3. Mention the specific job you are applying for and then briefly link your **competencies** to that specific job. You are not repeating the information in the resume. You are expanding on the information that is most relevant to the position.
4. *Speaking of research...*it's important to research the company and to make it clear in the cover letter you did so. You can show **initiative** by stating something like, "I researched your company's vision for the next 10 years..." or "I read in the trade journals that you are involved in project XXX and I know my skills can benefit the company."
5. Don't over use the word "I" though. This job is not about what the company can do for you. It is about what you can do for the company. Remember to keep the letter **specific** to the **job opportunity**.
6. Make sure there are **NO** spelling errors (*not a single one!*). Spelling includes the words used in the letter itself and the spelling of company and staff names. You should verify all spellings by visiting the business website or even calling on the telephone and asking for verification.
7. Use the cover letter to give a short explanation of anything on the resume that might raise questions like **employment gaps** or a **recent lay-off**.
8. Use excellent grammar and choose action words as opposed to words that express emotion. For example, you have **managed, directed** or **supervised** as opposed to believing, feeling or hoping. You are **confident** you are **qualified** for the job and your words need to reflect that confidence. *Your words should sell yourself!*
9. Don't try to cram as much information as possible in the cover letter. There should be plenty of **eye-pleasing** white space. If you have so much to explain in the cover letter that the page is stuffed full then you need to rework the resume and the cover letter.
10. End the cover letter by requesting a specific date or time to meet. Try not to end with a **generic statement** that says you look forward to hearing from the employer.

Above all, the cover letter should reflect a **positive attitude**. It is obvious you need and want the job or you wouldn't be sending the letter in the first place. Rambling letters that show lack of focus and maybe even contain a bit of self-pity are not interesting to read and will give a bad impression.

The cover letter is part art form and part business. It needs to be **interesting, accurate** and **focused**. If you have trouble writing the letter then it's important to let a professional resume writer help.

*Regal Resumes offers Cover Letter writing services, we will ensure that your cover letter is effective, targeted, and personal. See our Services page for more information.*