

Your cover letter is your chance to make a good first impression.

Rules of a good cover letter:

1. Personalize your letter

- Always address the letter to the person who has hiring power
- If you have information about the company, add it in a separate paragraph
- Do not use form letters

2. Ability to summarize

- Establish the essential elements and remain positive and objective
- Present your ideas clearly, in a organized fashion
- Do not exceed one page

3. Do not try to summarize your résumé in the letter

- Emphasize the important points relating to the position
- Bring out your abilities and achievements related to the position – Use action verbs (ie. analyze, establish, supervise, implement, coordinate, recruit..)

Hints to remember:

- Never send a résumé without a cover letter
- Write a maximum of one page
- Always get someone else to read your letter, especially if you are not sure about spelling
- Be honest. Bring out your strong points but do not exaggerate your training or experience
- Sign your letter
- Plan your follow-up (date, etc..) if applicable

Example of a good letter

John Sample
3975 College Street
Moncton, NB E1C 3K7

October 3, 2000

Mr. Paul White, Vice-President Marketing ¹
ABC Marketing
1000 Xyz Street
Saint John, NB E2L 2C3

Dear Mr. White

After reading an article in the New Brunswick Telegraph Journal about your expansion projects and also reading your annual report, I am convinced that I can provide the skills to help keep your company successful. Please consider me for the position of Marketing Representative. ²

I have work experience in marketing in addition to my diploma from the Business Studies: Marketing Program at the New Brunswick Community College. I have developed good management skills through my promotions from entry level sales Zone Manager with IBM. ³

My past managers have described me as flexible and eager to adapt to change. At IBM we worked in sales teams of six, and we were alternately responsible for sales leader roes as well as managing our own clients. During this time I created a spreadsheet which saved us about ten hours per week in tracking sales. This job has given me the enthusiasm and positive outlook needed to offer my services to ABC Marketing. ⁴

My training will benefit your advertising projects. In my Marketing Program, as outlined on my résumé, I used software such as Pagemaker, PowerPoint and Multimedia to create a five-minute marketing movie clip, which I have included for you to examine. In addition, my courses in interpersonal communication and writing will be useful in meeting customer needs.

I will call you during the week of October 28 to arrange a convenient time for us to meet to discuss any possible Marketing Representative openings in your firm. If you would like to contact me before then, you may reach me at (506) 555-7777 after 4pm or email me at ihopeful@jobsearch.ca ⁵

Yours truly

John Sample ⁶

Enclosures (2) ⁷

1. Address the letter to the person who has hiring authority. Always verify the title and spelling of the individual and company you are writing
2. Clearly show the objective of the letter
3. Show genuine interest in the company
4. Identify your strong points. Express yourself clearly and concisely
5. If you say you will follow-up, make sure that you do, otherwise you will lose credibility.
6. Remember to sign your letter
7. "Enclosure" means that there is something else besides the letter in the envelope

From the Cover Letter

In general, you should have a minimum of three paragraphs and a maximum of five.

Introduction

Indicate the purpose of the letter (as a result of a call, advertisement, or spontaneous application.)

Your interest in the company (optional paragraph)

Show that you are familiar with the company by finding information in annual reports, articles, etc.

Read this information and make reference to it in your letter

Qualifications

List your qualifications relevant to the position desired.

List your achievements

Indicate what you can contribute to the company

Pay special attention to this paragraph to talk about your strengths and abilities

Follow-up (optional paragraph)

If you say you will contact the employer again soon, be sure to do so.