Cover Letter-Template

What is a Cover Letter and what is its purpose ?

A cover letter is a letter you would write to your prospective employer usually to request a consideration of your CV for a particular job. You should never send out your CV without a cover letter. Even if you are applying for a job based on an ad that did not request one, your prospective employer will expect one!

A cover letter generally is used to fulfill one of two purposes. Either as a letter of application for a job, or a letter of inquiry about the employment possibilities at a firm/company/organization.

A cover letter is your first point of contact with a potential employer, so it creates a significant first impression. It also gives you another chance to emphasize what you have to contribute to the company or organization in a more personalized manner than you could express in a CV.

Your cover letter is the tool that can either land you a job interview or simply have your CV ignored entirely. For this reason it is important to invest time and effort in writing a cover letter that is effective, and which expresses what you can offer an employer as well as what you want from them clearly, in an interesting and personal way.

Prior to writing your letter, we recommend you do some research about your prospective employer, and the position in which you are applying for. This would give you a head-start on what your employer is expecting for a specific position, as well as prepares you for the type of information to include, emphasize, leave out in your cover letter, that will surely grab the attention of that specific employer. The easiest way to find such information is on the Internet. You can start your research by finding the company's website; a job description for the specific job you are interested in; then you can move on to finding out more about the responsibilities, knowledge, skills etc required for eligibility to such a position.

Once you have done this, you will be more prepared to write your cover letter confidently and effectively.

We have here also a cover letter template that can help you as a guideline, as well as a sample cover letters.

Template

This is a template designed to give you an idea of how to structure your cover letter and what type of information to include. Remember though, it is *just* a template.

Addressing your covering letter

Beginning the letter
- Dear Mr/Ms Shaheen - If you know the name of the person to whom you are writing (it is usually better to have a direct contact for whom to address the letter to).

- Dear Sir/Madam - If you do not have a specific contact and not sure of whom you need to address your letter to.

Opening Paragraph
The opening paragraph should be short and powerful. You should usually begin with a sentence in which you explain for what purpose you are writing, for example 'I would like to be considered for the position of Senior Programmer' etc . If you are applying for an advertised position in a newspaper or elsewhere then refer to the source where you saw the advert, ' In response to the Senior Programmer job vacancy advertised in 'Al-Rai' Newspaper' etc. If someone referred you to your contact, mention your friend's referral in this section. Examples of opening paragraphs:

1. In response to the advertised position in Al-Rai' Newspaper on March 12th , please consider my CV in your search for a Senior Programmer.

2. I was pleased to see in Al-Rai' Newspaper that you currently have a vacancy for a Senior Programmer. I am very interested in this position, and I believe my skills and experience could be a real asset to your company.

3. Having recently read in the Jordan Times of your company's plans for expansion, I am writing to inquire whether this will involve an increase in personnel. As a final year IT student at Jordan University, I am seeking a position in February that will develop my (programming skills).

Second Paragraph
In this paragraph you would express why an employer should consider hiring you. You should briefly describe your professional and academic qualifications and background. List and describe these in a way that is relevant to your prospective employer and the position for which you are applying for. If the job was advertised refer to all of the required skills mentioned in the advertisement.

Third Paragraph
Emphasise what you can do for the company. Outline a relevant career goal, and incorporate your research knowledge. Demonstrate that you know enough about the employer or position to relate your background to the employer. Mention specific skills which make you a good match for the employer's specific needs. This is an opportunity to expand in more detail the items in your CV most relevant to the position. . Refer to the fact that your CV is attached.

Fourth Paragraph
Once you have expressed to the employer that you are the best candidate for the job, you can now request an action to move the process forward, for example express your desire for an interview to discuss further possibilities (at their own convenience and schedule). State what you will do to follow up, for example mention you will call them within two weeks. State that you would be glad to provide the employer with any additional information needed. Finally, thank the employer for her/his consideration.

Closing the letter
Finish your letter with 'Sincerely', add a hand-written signature as well as your name typed underneath.

Format
As with starting a standard formal letter, write your address on the top left-hand corner, you then enter a space, add the date beneath that. The recipient's address goes on the left side also on the line after the date. See Sample Cover Letter.

Zaid S. Khayyat
Al-Ameer Shaker Street,
54321, Jordan
Tel: +962 6 5527497
Email: zskhayyat@yahoo.com

March 15th 2007

Mr. Omar N. Shaheen
P.O Box 166 Shmeisani
12345, Amman
Jordan

Dear Mr. Shaheen,

This letter is to express my interest in discussing the Web Programmer position posted on your Company web site. I have just completed a MSC in IT at the University of Jordan and this opportunity is very appealing to me. I believe that my strong technical experience and education will make me a very competitive candidate for this position.

I possess key strengths for succeeding in this position stemming from my extensive interest and personal experience in advancing in this field. I have successfully designed, developed, and supported live use applications. I am self-motivated and eager to learn new things. I strive for continued excellence, and can provide exceptional contributions to the development of more secured web applications since I have a solid background in this area.

I also have experience in learning and excelling at new technologies as needed. My experience includes Customer service and support, Programming both new applications and maintenance work. Problem isolation and analysis. Software quality testing. Application and requirement analysis. Process improvement and documentation

Please find attached my CV for additional information on my experience.

I am well acquainted with your company and my aspiration is to work for a company wit your reputation. I look forward to the possibility of interviewing with you. For this endeavour I will contact you again in two weeks from today's date to follow up. You can also contact me on 06- 555-555-5555. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you about this employment opportunity.

Sincerely,

(your signature)

Zaid Khayyat

General tips for your Cover Letter:

- Make sure there are no spelling mistakes or typos
- Always include a CV
- Use your own language and natural writing to express your abilities, strengths etc
- Reflect your motivation and enthusiasm for the position
- Make sure all listed skills are relevant to your employer's needs
- Use phrases that will be meaningful to your employer (such as the skills they listed for the position)
- Do not exceed 4 paragraphs
- Always try to follow up your letter with a telephone call or an e-mail.