

COVER LETTERS

WRITING YOUR COVER LETTER

Despite their name, cover letters are rarely read before resumes. Instead of acting as a “cover” for your application, a tailored cover letter is the perfect opportunity to **expand on and give more context to the information in your resume**. Your cover letter should **bolster your resume** without being repetitive.

Unlike a resume, a cover letter cannot be reused for different applications, changing a few words here and there. Research suggests that **you are 53% more likely to receive an interview with a tailored cover letter**, so you should be writing a new cover letter for each new position. It's worth the extra effort!

Your cover letter is a chance to **show off your research into the company** and give **specific examples** of what makes you the best possible candidate for the job.

ANATOMY OF A COVER LETTER

HEADING

At the top of your cover letter, include a heading with your name and contact information, including your city/state. It's best to use the exact heading from your resume. Listing your full address and the address of the recipient is no longer necessary.

GREETING

Address your cover letter with "Dear [Hiring Manager Name]." You should be able to find a contact name in the job description or on the company website. If you're unsure exactly who will be reading your cover letter, it's okay to make a reasonable guess.

INTRODUCTION

The first paragraph should lead with the position you're applying for and why you're interested. Aim to make a connection. This is the perfect opportunity to show off the research you've done into the organization, but make sure to keep it concise and direct.

MAIN BODY

The body of your cover letter should focus on the specifics of what you bring to the table in terms of skills and experience. Be careful not to simply repeat your resume. Identify and expand on only the most important details.

CALL-TO-ACTION

As you come to the end of your cover letter, it's important to include a call to action. Let recruiters know how to contact you (phone, email, etc.) and that you're prepared for the next steps. Be strong, but polite.

CLOSING & SIGN-OFF

Always be respectful of the time employers take to read your materials. Be sure to thank them for their time and consideration, and sign off with a professional end salutation such as “sincerely” or “kind regards.”

DESIGN & LENGTH

Cover letters around **1/2 a page long are more likely to be chosen** by recruiters. Aim for **3-4 paragraphs** and **never exceed 1 page in length**.

Your design should be **similar to that of your resume**.

Artie Columbus

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Dear Jane Doe,

I am writing to express my interest in the Graphic Designer position at Designated Designers Inc. Beyond your commitment to creativity, quality, and community engagement, I am drawn toward DDI's mission statement and its focus on giving back to the global community—a passion I share in my own creative endeavors. I am eager to use my creativity, analytical skills, and strong work ethic to further the important mission of your team.

My educational background and practical experience have equipped me with a strong foundation in design principles and proficiency in various design software including Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, Sketch, and InDesign. My internship experiences have honed my skills in designing both print and digital materials, managing multiple projects, and seamlessly collaborating with cross-functional teams to advance project goals.

During my internship at Youth Brands, I successfully designed an infographic on summer fashion trends that garnered significant cross-platform engagement on Twitter and Instagram, resulting in a notable increase in followers across new demographics. Additionally, my role at Buckeye Communications involved providing integrated marketing and communications support to diverse clients, including retail, automotive, and technology industry. This opportunity allowed me to fine tune the ways in which I connect with different audiences while centering a coherent, mission-oriented message—a skill I hope to bring to the DDI creative team.

Thank you for considering my application. I am looking forward to the opportunity to discuss how my skills and experiences align with the needs of Designated Designers Inc. in more detail. Please find my portfolio attached for your review.

Warm regards,

Artie Columbus

PRO-TIPS

- **Always customize your cover letter.** Each position is looking for something different and you want to highlight your skills and experiences according to those **unique needs**.
- **Research** the company or organization before writing your cover letter and use your research to form a strong **personal but professional connection**.
- Your first paragraph is your **hook**. It's your chance to introduce yourself, what you're applying for, and why you're applying. **Keep it short and to the point**.
- The body of your cover letter should be **one or two paragraphs**. Focus on the experience and skills that are **most relevant** to the position you're applying for.
- The clues for what your cover letter should touch on can be found **in the position description** and in researching the company's **values and mission**.