

## COVER LETTER CHECKLIST – Get the screener to read your resume (one page)

- One page**, no smaller than 11-pt, 1” margins; single spaced, standard font
- Name (14-pt) and contact information in header**
- Company address**
- RE: job title**
- Personalize the greeting**, wherever possible. AVOID “To whom it may concern”
- Paragraph One: the grabber**  
*Two to three short sentences:*
  1. Hook – what connects you to them? Referral, wherever possible
  2. Topline - why they should be interested in you
  3. Who you are and why you’re writing them – PERSONALITY!
- Paragraph Two: the sales pitch: use your C-C-A-R’s**  
*Specifically:*
  1. Demonstrate that your background meets all the qualifications
  2. Two or three *specific* examples of where you exceed them, to the employer’s benefit
- Paragraph Three: the request**
  - Tell them why this *particular* company and this *particular* job are important to you
- Paragraph Four: call to action**
  - State when you are available. If the Job Description specifies that you must state your salary requirements, add a sentence here about what they are.
  - Thank the reader. Unless they request no contact, state a specific date when you’ll follow up.

# THE COVER LETTER TEMPLATE

## Your Name

Your Address

Your E-mail Address

Your Phone Number / Cell Phone Number

Date

Contact's Name

Contact's Title /Department

Company name

Address

City, State, Zip

RE: [Job Title]

Dear Mr./Ms. CONTACT,

**GRABBER:** The first paragraph tells the reader why you are contacting them:

- who referred you
- what your connection is to the organization
- where you learned about the job opening

It also will state briefly who you are – in one line or two. Next, you will catch the reader's attention with your sincere, well-researched knowledge of their company and of their needs in terms of the position you are applying for – one brief sentence. Your goal is to "hook" the reader, let him or her know immediately that you are a qualified applicant, and they should read further.

**SPECIFICITY SELLS.** The second paragraph will be specific, telling why you are an ideal match for the job by. If you have all the qualifications listed on the Job Description, a table is an excellent way to do this. Don't worry if you don't, press on. This is also the paragraph in which you highlight a skill that complements the job that might not be required in the posting.

**THE HOOK.** The third paragraph is short, but important. It ties *their* organization to your greatest desires. This is where the reader knows, for certain, that this is not a generic cover letter.

**ETIQUETTE.** The last paragraph is your closing or goodbye: thank the reader for his or her time and consideration. Always include dates when you are available for work and the best time to reach you. Add a time when you will be contacting them to follow up. (*If you say when you are going to follow up by phone, do it when you say you will be*)

Sincerely,

Your name