

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