**Cover Letter Assignment** Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Assignment: Write a cover letter to the company that matches your resume objective**

**What is a cover letter?**

* Letter sent with your resume that explains how and why your particular skills, experience, achievements and personality can benefit a specific position and company
* Encourage your reader to turn to your résumé with genuine interest.

**Why is it important?**

* Shows the reader how your history and achievements meets the needs of the company you are applying for
* Confirms your qualifications for the position
* Explains how you are the right person for this company
* Explains how you will make a difference, be beneficial for that company

**Cover Letter Requirements**

* Cover letter must be typed using size 11 or 12 Font
* It should be ¾ - 1 full page in length
  + 3-4 paragraphs
* Letter must be correctly formatted, edited, and organized
  + Margins: Top 2” Sides & Bottom: 1”

**Content Requirements**

* Your Mailing Address (Matches Resume)
* Date of Submission: *Make sure it is current. Shows that the information is relevant*
* Name & Job Title of the Contact Person you are applying to. Do what you can to make sure you know who this person is
* Company Contact Information: Company Name & Mailing Address
* Reference Number you are applying for if given
  + Re:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Dear Contact Person’s Name
* **Opening Paragraph**
  + Reiterate the ad or position to which you're applying in the first sentence
  + In the second line provide a summary of what the letter's purpose is
    - "My background in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ appears to be a solid fit for the position of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It is with genuine interest that I enclose my résumé for your review and offer a brief summary of how my skills may benefit {Name of Company}'s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ efforts."
* **Second Paragraph**
  + Highlight the qualifications listed in your résumé (Skills, Education, Experience)
  + Explain how the skills you possess directly connect to the position you are applying for
  + Address the particular needs, concerns, missions and goals of the company (as you know them) & what you would do to help with them
  + Purpose of paragraph is to explain why you are the right “fit” for their company
* **Third Paragraph**
  + Indicate what you're hoping to gain from this submission: a call and an interview.
  + Thank them for taking the time to review your information & that you look forward to hearing from them
* End with salutation & the word Enclosures or Attachments

**Key Points:** A cover letter is aimed at getting the employer to call you back. Make sure you have a voicemail that works. Make sure that your greeting/message is appropriate. Have it critiqued by someone else to ensure it is professional and welcoming.

"You have reached Joe Smith at 234-5678. I'm sorry I'm unable to take your call at the moment, but your call is very important to me. Please leave your name and number and a brief message and I will return your call as soon as possible. Thank you for calling"

**Sample Cover Letter**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Your Mailing Address (Do not put your name here)  Today’s Date  Mr./Ms. Employers Name (If you don't have one, get one!)  Job Title (HR Director) Company Name Company Mailing Address  DEAR Mr./Ms. EMPLOYER:  **FIRST PARAGRAPH:** This is the "why I'm writing to you" paragraph which immediately tells the employer the position you want to be considered for. This is short - usually 2-3 sentences. Points to cover:   * Restate what position you are applying for in the first sentence * Show why you are interested in this position or organization. The goal is to make a connection to the company you are writing to - do this B*riefly* and S*pecificall*y.   **SECOND PARAGRAPH:** This is the "why I'm qualified" paragraph. Highlight some of your most relevant experiences and qualities as they relate to the position for which you are applying. Choose 2 - 3 points you want to make about **Specific** experiences/accomplishments or about general qualities you have exhibited, and provide  **Specific** examples to support those points. This paragraph will change according to the job/employer for which you are applying. This is usually the longest paragraph of the letter. You may break this paragraph into two if it looks too lengthy or if your points work best in separate paragraphs. Points to ponder:   * The first sentence should have a strong opener. It is a quick introduction, which is accomplishment-oriented and directed at the skills and qualifications needed for the job/industry. * The body of the paragraph should provide evidence to back up what you've just claimed. Cite specific jobs/internships/activities/projects and accomplishments associated with those experiences. Use your resume to come up with some specifics, but NEVER reiterate parts of your resume word for word. Discuss why what you did is important to the employer- relate the facts to the job. ***Strong examples are important!*** * The final sentence is a summary of what you've discussed above. It's a good idea to mention the position title and company name to bring the reader back to the specific job in question.   **FINAL PARAGRAPH:** This is a short 2-4 sentences paragraph. You should refer to the enclosed resume, request an interview or ask information. Let the reader know that you appreciate them taking the time to review your information. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.  Sincerely  *Your Signature*  Your Name (Matches Name on Resume) |
|  | Enclosures |