

## LUC WRITING CENTER – HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER

Once you have written or updated your resume and CV, the dreaded cover letter becomes a lot easier to write!<sup>1</sup> Basically, the cover letter is your chance to *specifically explain* the facts in your resume, CV, or both, while presenting yourself in a formal, but personal way to your potential employer. Since a cover letter is basically a letter, you can specifically reference the work you've done that you think qualifies you for the available position. There are many excellent approaches to writing a cover letter, but you should also be aware of several mistakes you should not make when writing your cover letter.

### COVER LETTER DOs!:

- 1) DO type the prospective employer's name and address in the top left corner. Begin the letter formally with the salutation *Dear Sir, or Madam*, unless you know the specific name of the recipient.
- 2) DO specifically *reference the title of the position for which you are applying, together with the name of the business, university, or institution that finances it.*
- 3) DO explain who you are, why you are applying, and then summarize how your skills and experience qualify you for the position. Sometimes applications contain a prompt for the cover letter, such as "Explain why you are the best candidate for the position." Don't misinterpret this prompt by writing about your superior abilities compared to your peer applicants; the prospective employer simply means, "Tell me why you think you can do this job well."
- 4) Do express yourself clearly. Maintain a fluent, professional writing style. Showcase your efficiency and verbal skills without appearing *pretentious* or *vague*.
- 5) DO close by *thanking the prospective employer* for considering you for the position.
- 6) Beneath your signature, type your *name, address, phone number, and email address*.

### Cover Letter DON'Ts!

- 1) DON'T write a cover letter for multiple job positions and **forget to change the names of the businesses** to which you are applying along with any specific details about your fitness for the position. A manager at Fish Pools and Co. won't be impressed by a cover letter explaining how you are perfect for a job at Trout Streams and Associates.
- 2) DON'T forget to include your **personal information** and explain how you can be reached. Your reader may want to set up an interview right away.
- 3) DON'T be **overly familiar or use sarcastic, obscure, or humorous phrases**. *Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_* is not an appropriate way to begin a cover letter. Good phrases with which to end a cover letter include *Yours, Sincerely Yours, or Sincerely, \_\_\_\_\_*, not *Bye, See you soon, or Peace Out, \_\_\_\_\_*.

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> For more job portfolio information, see "How to Write a Resume," "How to Write a CV," "Resume Examples," "CV Examples," and "Cover Letter Examples."