

Cover Letter of Intent

A cover letter is not just important, it is ESSENTIAL! Just as you would never just show up unannounced at a prospective employer's door, your resume should never just appear solo on a decision-maker's desk. Your cover letter is your first opportunity to introduce yourself, present your qualifications, and show the search committee you're a potential candidate for the advertised position.

10 Tips for Crafting Eye-Catching Cover Letters

1. **Personalize it to the company.** Anyone can reproduce a "canned" cover letter and hope for the best. Instead, take a few minutes to personalize your letter to show a company you are serious about working there.
2. **State the reason for your interest in the company.** Show that you have done your homework by mentioning company specifics such as department, a new project or a recent acquisition. Address the cover letter to a specific individual whenever possible.
3. **Cover letters should be clear and to the point.** Include the specific job title, two to three reasons why your experience makes a good fit and a brief outline of your career highlights.
4. **Highlight your strengths.** You may be a great person and never call in sick, but prospective employers really want to know why they should consider you for this position. Brag a little! Give a few facts, list relevant skills and state accomplishments on recent jobs that will be impressive.
Examples:
 - Increased overseas sales by 93 percent.
 - Negotiated new financial leases or loans
 - Implemented new training programs that reduced staff turnover by 15 percent
5. **State your intentions and qualifications right up front.** Don't expect senior personnel manager or recruiter to wade through a mishmash of information on your cover letter before understanding why you are sending your resume.
6. **Emphasize your skills, talents and experiences to show how you would be a valuable addition to the team.** If you have relevant volunteer or professional experience, mention it briefly in your cover letter. For example, if you are an accountant who serves as volunteer treasurer for a nonprofit community health organization, include that information. Or if you are an international sales rep who has lived in Europe and Asia and speaks several languages, add that to your letter.
7. **No negative information.** Never include personality conflicts with previous employers, pending litigation suits or sarcastic remarks in your cover letter. If you are bad-mouthing your present place of employment, interviewers may fear a repeat performance if they hire you.
8. **Only include salary requirements and/or salary history in the cover letter if a prospective employer requests it.** For example, you could write: "My salary requirements are \$60,000-\$75,000 (negotiable)." Or you might write: "My current salary is \$53,000 at XYZ Corporation." Eliminating this information from your cover letter may justify your resume getting tossed out. Never include salary and relocation information on your resume - only address this information in your cover level.

9. **Take action steps.** Take a proactive approach in your cover letter. State the fact that you are available for a personal interview; give your home, work, e-mail and/or cell phone numbers where you can be reached; note that you will follow up by phone (whenever possible) to provide any additional information required.

10. **Be direct!**

A professionally written cover letter and resume can open the door to your next position on the corporate ladder or to a new career in a different field. A clean, error-free presentation, combined with strong phrasing and solid facts, will encourage the reader to review the attached resume and call you in for an interview.

Contestant Name _____

	Possible Points	Points Received
<i>Composition</i>		
Correct format and stationary	10	
Punctuation	10	
Grammar	10	
Spelling	10	
General Appearance	10	
Composition Sub Total:	50	
<i>Content</i>		
Career goal specified	15	
Proper qualifications	35	
Content Sub Total:	50	
Composition Sub Total:	50	
Grand Total		
	100	