

Cover Letter 101

The purpose of a cover letter is to show you have the needed experience and skills for the position you are applying.

That **DOES NOT** mean you need to have done exactly what the position calls for, rather you need to show what you have done, having evidence you can do what is being asked.

Formatting

Your cover letter should match your resume (same font, etc.). Put your resume and cover letter next to each other and make sure they look good together.

Put your name and address in the upper right hand corner.

You want to find out who the supervisor for this position would be. Sometimes this is an easy task. For example, some job posts will say something like “this position reports to the HR Director” and you can go on to the website and get the name. Sometime you may have to call and ask... seems strange but you do not need to give your name or you can have someone else call on your behalf. Addressing a letter “To Whom It May Concern” is what everyone else is doing. **It is essential your letter stands out.**

You will want to put the formal name (Mr., Mrs., etc.) and their first and last name, position, department, and organization.

Now you are ready to start the letter with Dear Mr. Smith, for example.

Introduction

1. **Start off by expressing your interest in the position.** For example, say something like:

I am writing to express my interest in the Human Resource Benefits Manager position in the Human Resource Department at UConn Health Center.

2. **Explain why you be an excellent fit. BORROW** language from the job post. Remember, you do not need to have done the exact task, you just need to prove you can do the task. For example, if the post says:

Serve as subject matter expert for agency benefits programs and be well versed in administration requirements for all benefits plans, in accordance with plan documents and agency policies and procedures.

Say something like:

I would be an excellent fit for this position because my work has always been focused on administration and ensuring policies and procedures are being met.

3. **Explain what you are looking for in your next position.** Again **BORROW** language from the post. For example, if the post says:

Interface with outside benefits consultants, vendors, insurance carrier representatives and employees.

Say something like: I am looking for an opportunity that will allow me to continue collaborating with individuals within and outside of an organization.

*** I like to print out the job post and literally checkoff each qualification and/or duty as I address each one in the cover letter to make sure I have not missed anything.**

Body

You will want to start off by literally mentioning your most notable position(s) and how that makes you qualified for the position you are applying for.

Say something like:

My most notable experience has been my current position as Practice Manager in the _____ Department at _____ Hospital, which requires me to...

Keep with the same formula. **BORROWING** the language from the job post and changing the wording to show evidence you are qualified to do the duties even if you have not done the exact task before.

It is not important to start of the top of the job post and move in order down the page. It just is important to address every qualification and/or duty in your cover letter.

If you want to mention more than one position, start with your most recent then move to older positions.

Conclusion

This is the easy part.

Say something like:

My ultimate goal is to work in Human Resources. I would be delighted to join the _____ team. Please feel free to contact me at (phone number) or via email at (personal email).

Then say:

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Then sign the letter:

Sincerely

Your real signature (sign a piece of paper, scan, cut and copy onto the letter)

Print your name

You can do it!

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