

# Write a Cover Letter



## First paragraph

- ☛ Mention:
  - ☞ Why you are writing (include which position you are applying for)
  - ☞ How you learned of the position
  - ☞ Your current status (student or employed)
  - ☞ If you have completed your degree or when you expect to graduate
- ☛ Make a preliminary assertion as to your strength as a candidate

## Middle paragraphs

- ☛ Present **specific examples** highlighting how your background, experience, achievements, and/or qualifications meet the needs of the position description, department and/or organization
- ☛ Explain your interest in the organization
- ☛ Discuss your knowledge of and interest in some of the specific characteristics of the job, organization, and/or department
- ☛ Address if your profile differs from the job description

## Final paragraph

- ☛ Offer to provide additional material, information or a URL for a professional web page/portfolio (if applicable)
- ☛ Indicate:
  - ☞ How you can best be reached
  - ☞ What is enclosed with the letter
  - ☞ Your availability for and interest in an interview
  - ☞ Follow up action on your part
- ☛ Thank the reader for his or her consideration

## Structure and Details

- ☛ Appropriately address the salutation to a specific person, not job title (spell their name correctly).
- ☛ Organize your letter well
- ☛ Check for any spelling or grammar errors
- ☛ Use an appropriate font type and size
- ☛ Leave contact information in the letter
- ☛ Write in the tone of a confident (but not arrogant) professional
- ☛ Be direct
- ☛ Expect an interview

## keep in mind...

A cover letter is your opportunity to tell the employer what you are applying for and why you are a good match for the position and the organization

You should submit a cover letter with every resume, whether for an internship or job

While a resume provides a summary of your skills and experience, a cover letter takes it a step further by allowing you to highlight your specific qualifications



Ray Johnson  
125 Pearl Street  
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

October 3rd, 2006

Mary Patterson  
Section Manager  
Hewlett-Packard  
16399 W. Bernardo Drive  
San Diego, California 92717

Dear Mrs. Patterson:

In June 2007, I will be graduating from UC Irvine with a B.S. degree in Electrical Engineering. I am applying for a position as a Control Systems Engineer at your San Diego facility.

I seriously began considering future employment with Hewlett Packard early in my course work at UC Irvine. We use a number of your products in our laboratory work; and their design, precision and reliability are impressive. I saw, in a professional computing journal, that you are undertaking a new project to apply microcomputers in automatic control systems. Many of my electives were in control systems and computers, and I worked for three summers in microcomputer applications.

I have enclosed my resume which provides additional information about my undergraduate work and campus activities. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how my education and experience would be consistent with your needs. I will contact you by phone within two weeks to discuss the possibility of an interview.

Sincerely,

Ray Johnson

enclosure

More Cover Letter Help

✓ Resume and Cover Letter Writing online workshop at [www.career.uci.edu](http://www.career.uci.edu)

✓ Visit the Career Center to have your cover letter critiqued.