

# WRITE AN EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER

Your cover letter is a writing sample and a part of the screening process. By putting your best foot forward, you can increase your chances of being interviewed. A good way to create a response-producing cover letter is to highlight your skills or experiences that are most applicable to the job or industry and to tailor the letter to the specific organization you are applying to.

	Your Street Address City, State Zip Code
Use complete title and address.	Date of Letter Contact Name Contact Title Company Name Street Address City, State, Zip Code
Address to a particular person if possible and remember to use a colon.	<b>Dear _____:</b> <b>Opening paragraph:</b> Clearly state why you are writing, name the position or type of work you're exploring and, where applicable, how you heard about the person or organization. A summary statement may work well here by including three reasons you think you would be a good fit for the opportunity.
Make the addressee want to read your resume. Be brief, but specific.	<b>Middle paragraph(s):</b> Explain why you are interested in this employer and your reasons for desiring this type of work. If you've had relevant school or work experience, be sure to point it out with one or two key examples; but do not reiterate your entire resume. Emphasize skills or abilities that relate to the job. Be sure to do this in a confident manner and remember that the reader will view your letter as an example of your writing skills.
Remind the reader of what you can do for the organization.	<b>Closing paragraph:</b> Reiterate your interest in the position, and your enthusiasm for using your skills to contribute to the work of the organization. Thank the reader for his/her consideration of your application, and end by stating that you look forward to the opportunity to further discuss the position.
Always sign letters.	Sincerely,  Your name typed

## Some general rules about letters:

- Address your letters to a specific person if you can.
- Tailor your letters to specific situations or organizations by doing research before writing your letters.
- Keep letters concise and factual, **no more than a single page**. Avoid flowery language.
- Give examples that support your skills and qualifications.
- Put yourself in the reader's shoes. What can you write that will convince the reader that you are ready and able to do the job?
- Don't overuse the pronoun "I".
- Remember that this is a marketing tool. Use lots of action words.
- Have an OCS adviser proofread your letter.
- If converting to a .pdf, check that your formatting translates correctly.
- Reference skills or experiences from the job description and draw connections to your credentials.
- Make sure your resume and cover letter are prepared with the same font type and size.