

Pitching Yourself for the Job

A Template for Cover Letters

Do I need a cover letter? Cover letters are often an afterthought to many job seekers. However, many recruiters expect to see a cover letter as part of the application package. The cover letter also gives job seekers an additional opportunity—outside of the resume—to pitch themselves for the job opening.

You can use your cover letter to explain why you are interested in the position. Your resume only talks about your skills and past experience. However, it doesn't give you the opportunity to talk about why you are interested in the company and role. This added context can help recruiters better understand the background on your resume. It also serves as an additional outlet to match your experience with the job.

There is no “right” way to do a cover letter. However, the following template gives you an outline of the types of questions and themes your cover letter should be addressing.

Paragraph 1

- What you are applying for?
- Why you are interested in the company: This shouldn't just be a list of known things about the company. Instead it should be more personal about why YOU want to work THERE. Show you've done your research about them and can draw a connection between what they do and your interests/experience
- Why you are interested in the position?
- THESIS: This should be the last sentence of your paragraph. It should list 1-3 skills or experiences that will best highlight your fit for the position. Take a look at the position description to try to match your thesis statement to what they are looking for.

Paragraph 2-4

- The next two to three paragraphs should give "proof points" to the skills or experiences that you listed in your thesis. You may want to do one paragraph per skill/experience. Or you might find that you can combine them. But make sure that if it's listed in your thesis, then it has some type of proof point in the subsequent paragraphs.

Final Paragraph

- Reiterate your interest.
- Reiterate that you are a good fit.
- Thank them for their time and that you look forward to hearing from them

