

# COVER LETTERS

A cover letter is a letter of introduction and an invitation to the employer to read your resume. It is standard business practice to send a cover letter along with your resume, even when faxing or e-mailing a prospective employer. The only time you don't need a cover letter is when you hand-carry your resume to the employer. When sent by mail, a cover letter literally "covers" your resume, hence the name. Don't send a form letter. Always personalize your cover letters, ideally including the name and title of the hiring authority. If that is not possible, you can address the letter as " Dear Recruiter," or "Dear Hiring Manager." Your cover letter should never be longer than a single page. You want to use the same font and paper as your resume. You can either copy the format for listing your identifying information from your resume, or you can write your letter using the format for writing standard business letters.

## Sample Cover Letter Format:

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**YOUR NAME**  
Your street address  
Your city, state zip code  
(Your area code) your phone number  
Your email address

Today's Date

Name of person you are contacting  
Person's title  
Company name  
Street address  
City, state zip code

Dear Mr. or Ms. \_\_\_\_\_:

Paragraph 1: Tell the employer your reason for writing. If you are writing in response to an advertisement in the paper, include the title of the position you are applying for and how you found out about it. If somebody referred you to this company, list that person's name and title and where they work. Write something positive in this first paragraph (I am very interested in applying for the position of.....).

Paragraph 2: Briefly highlight the strengths of your resume by stressing what you can do for the employer. By carefully analyzing the job description, you can determine the skills the employer is looking for. Try to match the employer's requirements with the qualifications that you can offer. Sometimes an additional paragraph is needed to list all of your strengths and accomplishments, rather than trying to fit them into a single paragraph.

Paragraph 3: Request an interview or tell the employer that you will call for an appointment.

Sincerely,

(sign your name in this space)

Type your name

Enclosure

# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

**JANE SMITH**

1701 Broadway Avenue East  
Seattle, WA 98122  
(206) 555-1234  
jsmith@yahoo.com

January 2, 2002

Mr. Brian Johnson  
Manager, Human Resources  
Allison Fay Productions  
9876 Main Street, Suite 200  
Bellevue, WA 98004

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I am very interested in applying for the position of Administrative Assistant at Allison Fay Productions. I learned of this opportunity through your advertisement in the Seattle Times of this past Sunday.

As an administrative assistant with over two years of recent office support experience, I believe that I possess the skills and experience ideally suited to the position you offer. In my current position as assistant to the department manager and a sales staff of five at an insurance agency, I use Microsoft Word, Access and Excel on a daily basis to prepare reports and a variety of office correspondence. My interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills are strong: all my previous work experience has required me to be in frequent contact with customers in person, by mail and by telephone.

I look forward to meeting with you and discussing how I can make an immediate and positive contribution to Allison Fay Productions.

Sincerely,

*Jane Smith*

Jane Smith

Enclosure