



How to Guide for Writing an Effective Cover Letter

Your cover letter, like your resume, provides an employer with their first impression of who you are as an individual and prospective employee. It is essential to write a cover letter that is clear, concise, and highlights your skills, abilities, and fit for the position and company.

This guide will provide you with some simple steps to help you create a cover letter that will land you the interview you want!

Step One: Know the career you desire! Research the company where you are applying and search the company's human resources page on their website to see if they offer and hints and tips for prospective employees.

Step Two: Know your strengths! Make a list of your credentials (ex. degrees, certificates, employment experience, skills, accomplishments, affiliations, etc.) that match the position description for the job you are applying. NOTE: Do not list all of your information in the cover letter, that is the job of your resume, your cover letter should highlight why you are the person for the position by explaining in writing some of the attributes you bring to the job and company.

Step Three: Review examples of cover letters so that you have an idea of what to write. HINT: Make sure to tailor your cover letter to each position you apply for, do not submit a blanket cover letter for all jobs. In addition, your cover letter should be no longer than ONE page!

Step Four: Open Microsoft Word and begin crafting your cover letter.

Step Four-Optional: Watch the following video for a visual guide for writing your cover letter:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4nPOLu-TaE&feature=em-share_video_user

Step Five: Make sure you include the following in your cover letter:

- Personal contact information (usually at the very top of the page or in the header)
- Employer contact information (if available)
- Salutation or greeting line (such as, Dear Hiring Committee, Dear Sir or Madame, etc.)
- Introduction (this paragraph should tell the employer who you are, the position you are applying for and why you are a qualified candidate, and a thank you for consideration, make sure you make it enticing so that the employer wants to continue reading)
- Body (this paragraph should outline your skills, abilities, experience, and qualifications for the position and what you have to offer the company as a whole)
- Closing (this paragraph should express your excitement for the opportunity, an additional thank you for the consideration, and a re-iteration for the best way to contact you)

Step Six: Contact a Career Coach at BMCC and ask if they can review your cover letter.

Step Seven: Make any changes to your cover letter based on feedback and edits from a Career Coach.

- Step Eight:** Print your cover letter and take a quick glance at it to see if it is eye catching and formatted in a way that is easy to read and understand.
- Step Nine:** Save your cover letter in a place where you will not lose it and can access it easily!
- Step Ten:** Submit your cover letter with your resume to the employer.