

Cover Letters & Thank-you Notes

Whether you send a résumé by mail or e-mail, always include a cover letter. The cover letter is an introduction that describes your qualifications and emphasizes how well you fit the employer's job description.

Customize each résumé and cover letter to respond to the specific job opening for which you're applying. Be sure to use terms and words like those in the job posting. Some companies use an electronic scanner as a screening device to check for specific words or terms associated with the job or industry.

Effective Cover Letters

- Are personalized for a unique position at a specific company
- Explain why you are sending your résumé
- Create an interest in reading your résumé
- Tell how you learned about the position
- Provide information requested by the employer
- Describe skills, education, or experiences important to this position
- Demonstrate your written communication skills

Application Cover Letter

An application cover letter, sent with the résumé, responds to an advertised job. Match your qualifications to those requested in the job posting, using keywords, industry terms, and descriptions to show how well you meet the job requirements.

Inquiry Cover Letter

When no job is advertised but you are interested in working for a company, you can send an inquiry cover letter asking about job openings. Highlight your skills, experience, and education, and enclose your résumé. This strategy requires a phone call or personal contact with the employer either before or

after you send your information.

Cover Letter Points to Consider

Whenever possible, address the cover letter to a specific person by name and title. This will result in more interviews. If no contact name is given in the job advertisement but there is a phone number, call and ask for the human resources manager's name so you can address your letter to a specific person. Research the company by checking their website or talking to employees so you can add details about the company in your letter.

When responding to a "blind ad" where no company name is given, send the letter to the title of the appropriate hiring manager, (e.g. "Production Manager", "Maintenance Supervisor", "Executive Director", "Sales Manager", etc.) Never use the term, "To Whom It May Concern".

Have Questions?

Georgia Department of Labor Career Centers are available to assist you with job leads and free access to the Internet, copiers, phones, and faxes.

Locate an office near you at www.gadol.gov.

Georgia
DOL
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Mark Butler, Commissioner

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Cover Letter Points to Consider

- Signing the letter in blue ink emphasizes it is an original. Black ink is also fine. Never use any other color for the signature.
- Keep sentences short and to the point. Reflect your individuality but avoid seeming too familiar, overbearing, humorous, or cute.
- Keep the cover letter brief, usually no more than three to five paragraphs and one page.
- Consider using the same type of paper for both your cover letter and résumé.

Sample Cover Letter Format

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Email Address

Month, Day, Year

Mr./ Ms./Dr. Firstname Lastname
Title
Name of Organization
Street or P.O. Box Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./ Ms./Dr. Lastname:

1st paragraph: State why you are writing, how you learned about the job opening, and introduce yourself.

2nd paragraph: Tell why you are interested in this job or in working for this company. Share what you know about the company or this position and share your relevant experiences. Mention specific skills, qualities, or educational abilities that qualify you for this position. Detail specific items in your résumé that match the job requirements.

3rd paragraph: Say that you would like to interview for a position or to talk with the employer about hiring plans. Mention that your résumé is enclosed along with any other required documents. State what you will do to follow-up, such as call the employer within two weeks. Thank the employer for his/her consideration.

Sincerely,

(Handwritten signature)
Name typed

Enclosure(s) (refer to résumé, etc.)

NOTE: If necessary, add another paragraph or two after the 2nd paragraph to further describe experiences and abilities

Thank-you Letters and Notes

Every “thank you” is a chance to restate your qualifications and leave a positive impression. Send a thank-you letter or note to employers and contacts whenever they have helped you. Though some employers appreciate “thank you” emails following an interview, always send a written “thank you” after an interview as well.

A thank-you letter follows a standard business format, while a thank-you note may be a handwritten note or card.

- Restate your interest in the position or company.
- Be brief and to the point.
- Plan your follow-up. Tell the person when and how he/she will hear from you in the future.
- If there was a panel involved in the interview, send a personalized letter to each person or send a single letter to the key person for distribution.



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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program | Auxiliary Aids & Services are Available Upon Request to Individuals with Disabilities

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