WRITING A COVER LETTER

A cover letter is a one-page document submitted along with a resume, elaborating on information in a more detailed, memorable and personal way. It is meant to succinctly express how an applicant's professional skills, experience and interests fit the needs of a company or position. Researching a position, company or industry and adapting your cover letter accordingly will greatly improve the document's overall effectiveness.

HEADING:

For a printed cover letter, place your **contact information** at the top of the page. This section should visually match your resume and use a consistent format and layout. A cover letter sent as an email does not need a heading. Skip to the next section, "Greeting," if the cover letter will be sent as an email.

- Include your name, permanent address, phone number and a personal email address
- If you have them, include a LinkedIn page or a personal website URL
- Skip a line and include the date of application
- Skip another line and include the recipient's contact information
- Leave a space below the heading

GREETING:

Include a **formal salutation** and address your letter to the proper person or position title.

- Use a common business greeting, such as:
  - "Dear (First name Last name),"
  - "Hello (Position title)" or
  - "Greetings,"
- Leave a space below the greeting

INTRODUCTION:

Begin with a one or two sentence **personal introduction** explaining why you are a good candidate for a position.

- Mention the position title you are applying for
- Describe how you discovered the position or company
- Explain why you are enthusiastic about and interested in the position or company
- Briefly describe your years of related experience or qualifications for the position
- Leave a space below the introduction

(Continued on reverse side)

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Additional online resources can be found at www.madonna.edu/owl
Rev. 05.12.2020

BODY:

In a brief paragraph highlight your **skills and successes** as they relate to the position.

- Summarize experiences that fit specific requirements or similar positions
- Emphasize skills with keywords from the job descriptions
- Offer precise facts about your accomplishments, including quantifiable outcomes if available
- Include professional achievements, praise or awards
- Include academic achievements, extracurricular activities or personal goals
- Leave a space below the body

CONCLUSION:

Concisely **reiterate your excitement** and gratitude about the opportunity.

- Thank the recipient of the letter for their time and consideration
- Politely explain that you eagerly await their decision or instructions
- Specify your preferred contact information and availability
- Leave a space below the conclusion

SIGNATURE:

Include a **valediction and your name.**

- Use a common complementary closing, such as:
    - "Sincerely,"
    - "Best,"
    - "Regards,"
    - "Thank you,"
    - "Respectfully,"
    - "Kind regards,"
    - "Best regards,"
- For printed cover letters, skip two to four lines to create room to sign your name
- Type your full name and include any appropriate suffixes
- Some e-mail accounts will let you embed a signature within them; this is a great tool because you can add a signature along with contact information

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THE OFFICE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT:

The **Office of Career Development** offers programs and services that support students and graduates who are initiating and implementing their career plans. Visit the **Students** section of the **MUPortal** for:

- Job Search Websites and Engines
- On Campus Student Employment opportunities
- Internship information
- Career Exploration Tools
- Professional Resources, such as resume tips, samples, templates and guides

Adapted from https://myportal.madonna.edu/ICS/Campus_Life/Job_Search_Advice.jnz