

## The Cover Letter

### WHAT IS IT?

A letter written to accompany or "cover" your resume when mailing to potential employers. Never send a resume by itself.

### WHY SEND A COVER LETTER?

- To tell an employer what kind of position you are seeking.
- To highlight the parts of your background that are especially important for the position.

### MUST COVER LETTERS BE INDIVIDUALLY PREPARED?

Yes. Cover letters must be addressed to a specific individual whenever possible. Call the organization and get the exact spelling and correct title of the person.

### HOW IS A COVER LETTER ORGANIZED?

**Opening:** a brief introduction explaining why you are writing and the type of position you want. If someone referred you, mention it here.

**Body:** one to three paragraphs. Describe your qualifications for the job including experience, academic background and personal qualities. Stress what you can **do** for the organization and why they should hire you. **Be positive.** Don't apologize for what you haven't learned yet. Show why your qualifications are a good match for the job. Choose a writing tone that is neither bragging nor overly modest.

**Closing:** discuss what will happen next. Request an interview and indicate when you are available. If you plan to telephone, say so. Make it clear where you can be reached. Thank the employer for considering you. **Don't forget to sign your letter.**

### HINTS

- \* Single space the letter; double space between paragraphs.
- \* Keep the letter to one page.
- \* Try to open with an interesting sentence. If possible, avoid the usual "I am graduating from Drew University in May..."
- \* Use perfect spelling and grammar.
- \* Be clear and direct. Eliminate trite phrases or long, rambling sentences.
- \* **PROOFREAD** and have others proofread for you. The Career Center will be glad to help.
- \* Print the final copy on a clear (preferably laser) printer. Use good quality paper.

C.M. Box 389  
Drew University, P.O. Box 802  
Madison, NJ 07940  
February 5, 2009

Your address  
Do not include your name

Mr. Richard Tompkins  
Director, Human Resources  
The Perkins Company  
1147 Paul Revere Avenue  
Boston, MA 03459

name of contact  
title  
address

use a colon after the name

Dear Mr. Tompkins:

**1st Paragraph:**

I am applying for the underwriting position advertised in indicate where the you saw the position.

*or*

After reading the description of FBC Advertising, I would like to apply for a position as a media coordinator

*or*

Mr. Juan Perez, Director of Marketing, suggested that I contact you to explore a possible position with Ajax Corporation.

*or*

Your advertisement for an editorial assistant in today's New York Times especially interested me because I have strong skills and experience in editing.

**2nd Paragraph (or more):**

Body of the letter. Single space between sentences; double space between paragraphs. Describe how your education, previous experience, activities, skills or personal qualities make you a good candidate for the position. Tell what you can do for the organization.

**Closing Paragraph:**

I will be visiting in Boston during the week of \_\_\_\_\_ and would like the opportunity to interview with you. I will telephone next week with the hope of arranging an interview appointment.

*or*

I am available to interview for this position at any time. Please phone me at 973-408-5389. I would be happy to provide you with any additional information you may need.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
*Natalie Wong*  
Natalie Wong

Comma after closing,  
then skip three lines.  
Type your name.  
Sign in the blank space.