

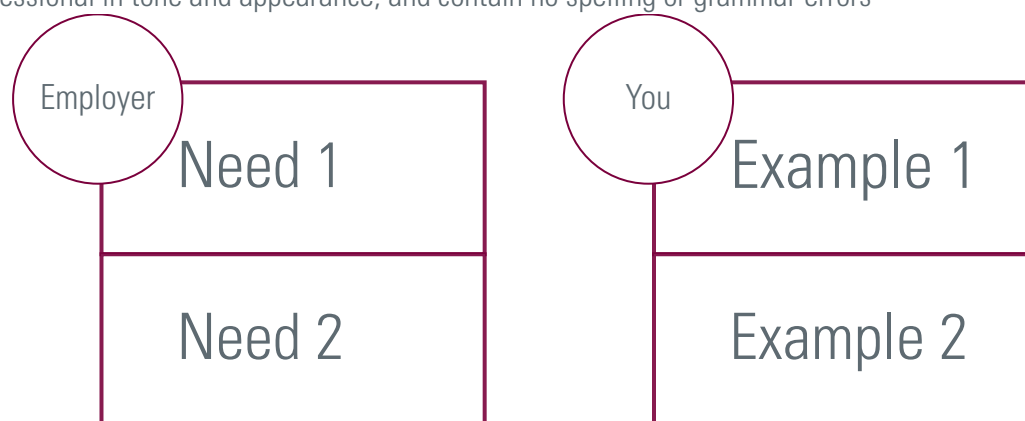
# COVER LETTER TIPS

## WHAT IS A COVER LETTER AND WHY DO I NEED ONE?

A cover letter should accompany every resume, unless otherwise stated in the posting. It is an opportunity to explain to the hiring manager why they should consider you and why the attached resume will be of some interest to them. This is where you highlight and expand on your most relevant points in your resume.

### A good cover letter will:

- Give the reader a sense of the person behind the words, and demonstrate interest and enthusiasm
- Relate to the reader and provide examples of your relevant experiences, skills or qualities
- Link your experience to the position
- Be professional in tone and appearance, and contain no spelling or grammar errors



Cover letter writing takes practice. Here are some tips to make it easier:

- Research the organization or department so you can explain how your values and interests match the organization's goals and values.
- Know what you can and want to contribute — your skills, qualities and experiences.
- **Note:** You can disclose information about yourself if you feel it will support your application or fulfill a diversity hiring need (a disability, Indigenous self-identification, etc.). Many inclusive employers encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds. Using language like "lived experience" is recommended.

### Common cover letter mistakes:

- Too many similarities with your resume — i.e. using short sentences or bullet points that do not provide any additional information
- Not being position-specific or forgetting to update the company name
- Not articulating how previous experience relates or adds value to the role you are applying for



## THE FORMAT OF A COVER LETTER

Your contact info (Tip: You can use the same format as the header on your resume)

Date you will submit the application

Full name of individual in hiring position (Make sure spelling is correct)

Position of the individual

Company name

Address

Postal Code

Re: Application for job ID #/job title, if applicable

Dear \_\_\_\_, (Full name — if the name is not available, use “Hiring Manager”)

The first paragraph usually addresses what position you are applying for, how you became aware of the position, why you are interested in the position or organization. You can integrate some of your key qualifications as an opener and to grab the reader’s attention.

The middle two-to-three paragraphs usually address how your experience (work, academic, volunteer), skills and interests relate to the position and how your values/goals fit with the organization. Use your understanding of the job requirements to decide which skills and experiences to highlight. Provide some specific examples to capture the reader’s attention. Use Situation, Action, Result (SAR) stories to explain these experiences.

Address the following points in the body of the letter to make it easy for the reader to view how you are a good match for their needs. Include specific experiences that relate to the job. Customize each letter and address specific qualifications that have been identified in the posting. Include characteristics that make you a good employee and provide some evidence of such (awards, feedback from supervisors or clients, etc.).

In the closing paragraph, briefly summarize some professional qualities (work ethic, strengths, etc.) that will contribute to the organization or team. Explain how and when you can be contacted. Finish the letter with some pleasantries such as: “I look forward to meeting with you to discuss how I may contribute to your team” or “Thank you for considering my application.”

Sincerely,

Full name

