Cover Letter Navigation:

**Step 1: Deconstruct the Job Description**

Identify employer needs and where you can fill that need based on past experiences

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What the Employer Needs** | **When I've Done This Previously** |
| *Example: Analyzing information and making a recommendation* | *Example: Cluster: Collaborated to conduct QSR industry research to identify and present best strategies for company's success.* |
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**Step 2: Identify Your Audience**

*Answer the following:*

Who will be reading this letter? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What industry should this appeal to? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Circle one:* **Mr. | Mrs. | Ms. | Hiring Manger | Hiring Committee**

**Step 3: Introduce Yourself**

The first paragraph of your cover letter provides an introduction of you to the employer. It should include the position you are applying to, how you found the position, and introduce your fit for the position. The first paragraph is generally three to four sentences long. Include the name of a mutual contact, if you have one. You can use the paragraph’s end to introduce your fit with the position.

**Starting Your Intro Paragraph:**

*Answer the following:*

What position are you applying for?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Statement about your professional self: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mutual Contact (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

What specifically makes you a strong fit?: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4: Market Yourself**

The second paragraph of your cover letter describe your fit for the position in detail. Describe how your qualifications match those in the job description and the value you can provide to the organization. Reference one or two specific examples. Do not repeat your resume word for word – provide more detail and information to highlight the achievements in your resume. The paragraph is approximately four to six sentences long.

**Starting Your 2nd Paragraph:**

*Using the chart from Step 1 to build out your marketing paragraphs and don't forget to use P-A-R (Problem-Action-Result) story-telling format and keywords from the job description*

The third paragraph of your cover letter describes the synergies between you and the company. Establish why you are interested in the company, such as values or traits you are looking for in a company. Be sure to do you research – this can be done through previous conversations with the employer, an informational interview, or through your own secondary research. Do not copy information directly from the website. The paragraph is approximately four to six sentences long.

**Starting Your 3rd Paragraph:**

*Answer the following:*

Why are you interested in the company?: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What values or traits do they have that you are interested in?:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Who told you about these areas of the company (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 5: Finish Strong**

The fourth and final paragraph should restate your interest in the position, thank the employer for considering your application, and provide your contact information (phone number and email).

**Starting Your 4th Paragraph:**

*Answer the following:*  
How will you reiterate your interest in the position?: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Don't forget the Complimentary Close:**

*Circle one:* **Sincerely | Best regards | Warm Regards**

# Cover Letter Rubric - 25 Points

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1 - 2 Points** | **3 Points** | **4 - 5 Points** |
| **Presentation & Format**  visually appealing, proper grammar and spelling, standard cover letter format | * Does not use format * Letter addressed improperly * Letter header does not match resume header * Visually unappealing | * Uses proper format, but elements are incorrect with date and/or employer address and signature/ address sections * Uses a greeting and addresses a person, but some elements need editing * Name and contact information are included but header does not match the resume * Some parts are visually appealing, but others can be enhanced | * Uses correct business letter format with date and employer address at the top and job seeker signature/ address at the bottom * Uses an appropriate greeting and addresses the correct person and department * Header matches resume and includes name and contact information |
| **Grammar & Spelling**  You effectively proofread to remove any grammatical or spelling errors | * Uses incorrect grammar or language for position * Multiple grammatical or spelling errors | * Some of the language and grammar is inappropriate for the position and needs editing | * Uses appropriate language and grammar for the position * Error free & visually appealing |
| **Introduction Paragraph**  Why you are writing and why the organization should be interested in you | * Does not identify position, organization and purpose * Does not describe interest in, and brief qualifications for, position and/or organization * Does not use transition sentence to introduce second paragraph | * Vague in describing position, organization and/or purpose for writing * Inadequately describes interest in, and brief qualifications for position and/or organization * Weak transition into second paragraph | * Identifies positions, organization and purpose for writing * \*Describes interest in, and brief qualifications for, position and organization being pursued * \*Uses a transition sentence to effectively introduce second paragraph |
| **Marketing Paragraphs**  Present relevant qualifications, experience, and skills related to the position/organization - Share your story that reflects your experience | * Does not describe ways to contribute to the position/ organization based on relevant experience and qualifications * \*Does not illustrate contributions referenced in opening  in a relevant and/or measurable way | * Inadequately describes one to three ways to contribute to the position/organization based on experience and qualifications * Illustrations of contributions referenced in opening paragraph are not relevant enough or measurable enough | * Describes two to three ways to contribute to the position and organization based on experience and qualifications * Illustrates—using examples—relevant, measurable contributions to organizations referenced in opening |
| **Closing Paragraph**  Wrap up/action | * Does not thank reader * Does not express interest in a meeting or conversation | * Thank you statement and/or expression of interest for a meeting or conversation needs editing | * Thanks reader for considering him/her * \*Expresses interest in a meeting or conversation |

**Total Score: /25**