

A cover letter is an essential part of your job search communication with an employer or graduate school. A cover letter or letter of application should always accompany your résumé whether it is mailed, emailed or faxed. For specific positions, your cover letter should be tailored to each individual employer and reflect your interest in the organization or position advertised. While the résumé provides an overview of your background, the cover letter allows you the opportunity to highlight those aspects of your background that are relevant to the particular position you are seeking and gives the employer a sample of your writing skills.

BASIC TIPS

- Letters should be addressed to a specific individual (preferably the person in charge of hiring or a manager/supervisor of the department to which you are applying). Make every effort to find the name of the individual, but when that is not possible, address the letter, “Dear Hiring Manager.”
- Research the organization and use what you learn to address why you want to work with the employer.
- If you have a job description with required or preferred qualifications, use your cover letter to show how you meet the requirements for the position. Use key words from the description.
- Focus on what you can do for the employer, not how the job will benefit you.
- Don’t start every sentence with “I.” Use some variety in your sentence structure.
- Instead of repeating your entire résumé, highlight relevant experiences or elaborate on specific areas that relate to the position. Use concrete skills and examples.
- Don’t apologize for not having certain qualifications.
- Keep your letter short and simple. It should not be more than one page.
- Your letter should be flawless. Keep it free of spelling and grammar errors.
- A professional cover letter should be typed in a business format.
- If mailing the letter, print it on paper that matches your résumé. Sign the letter in the space above your typed name with a pen.
- You can choose to insert an image of your signature if you are emailing the letter. Career Services can help you by scanning your signature and supplying you with an electronic signature document.

Kelly Kohler

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711 E. Boldt Way, SPC 810, Appleton, WI 54911

Date of Letter

Person's Name

Person's Title

Name of Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Your name and contact information should match the format on your résumé.

Dear Mr./Ms. _____:

Opening paragraph: Identify the job you are applying for. Convey enthusiasm for the position and the organization. Let them know what skills you have to offer. If a person within the organization referred you, mention the contact's name and title (make sure you have that person's permission).

Middle paragraph(s): Give 2–3 specific examples of how you have used your skills, citing work and volunteer activities and how they relate to the position for which you are applying.

Closing paragraph: Thank the employer for his/her time and consideration. Give your contact information and let them know you look forward to hearing from them. You **may** indicate that you will call to follow up during a specific time, but then you **have to** call and follow up.

Sincerely,

Type your name

This is the format if you are attaching your cover letter to an email. If you are printing and mailing your cover letter, include one or two more spaces above your typed name, leaving room to sign your name.

Tina Trever

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May 6, 2015

Ms. Mary Nelson
Staffing Coordinator
Thresholds Psychiatric Rehabilitation Clinic
2900 Rosemont Blvd.
Rosemont, IL 60018

Dear Ms. Nelson:

I am writing to apply for the Case Manager/Outreach Worker position with Thresholds Psychiatric Rehabilitation Clinic. Kelly Kohler, a Clinical Therapist at Thresholds, has told me how much she enjoys her position and recommended that I apply. My qualifications include 2 years providing direct service, experience creating individualized treatment plans and familiarity with maintaining confidential records.

In my experience as an autism line therapist and group home supervisor, I provided emergency and daily support to residents. Educating clients about life skills in both group and individual settings and developing individual treatment plans for as many as 30 clients, I used different activities in addition to behavioral modification techniques to improve communications, behaviors and social skills of the clients. My client records were always completed accurately and timely.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my qualifications. I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss my qualifications and to learn more about this opportunity. Please feel free to contact me at 920-555-9876 or tina.r.trever@yahoo.com.

Sincerely,

Tina Trever

SENDING AN EMAIL COVER LETTER

The most important part of sending an email cover letter is to follow the employer's instructions. If the job posting says to include your cover letter and résumé as attachments, attach Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF files (preferred) to your email message. The body of your email should say something like this:

Dear Ms. Hurvis:

Attached is my cover letter and résumé for the internship position with ABC Company. Please contact me at 920-832-6561 or kelly.t.kohler@lawrence.edu with any questions.

Thank you.

Kelly Kohler