

Do I really need a cover letter?

Your cover letter will convey three important things: **1)** you understand the company's current needs, **2)** you've got the skills and experience to meet those needs, and **3)** you're a smart person and a good writer.

What information do I need to write an effective cover letter?

- A job description
- Information about the company
- List of skills and experience you have that can prove you can do the job.
- Name of the person to whom you are addressing the letter.
- A salary range you've researched, if you are required to submit this information

Tips to give you the edge:

- Open the letter with something that " grabs attention" or " generates interest".
- Keep it short, should be no more than four paragraphs, three is ideal
- Customize, customize, employers can spot generic letters very easily
- Use bold face. Bullets, and italics for bringing attention to detail
- Write in a friendly, enthusiastic and confident tone.
- Differentiate yourself, say something new
- Focus on the needs of the employer.
- Communicate how you can bring added value
- Do site examples from past experiences of skills needed for this position.
- Limit sentences to seven or eight words and paragraphs to four or five lines.
- Keep it clean, neat and easy to read.
- Employers favor personalized cover letters

Remember:

- Write it yourself.
- Check spelling, grammar and sentence structure
- Don't use the word "I" excessively.
- Sign the letter - details say a lot about you.
- Use quality paper that matches the resume and envelopes.
- Do not abbreviate words or write it in all caps.
- Use a readable font and font size, nothing less than 10
- Decision to Include design elements should be determined by the industry
- Design elements should not become the focus of the resume
- When sending electronically, cover letter is placed in the body of email and the resume attached
- Email it to yourself first

Resources:

www.quintcareers.com/covres.html - Short articles covering all aspects of cover letters
<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverlettersamples/a/coverlettsample.htm> - sample letters
www.quintcareers.com/sample_internship_letter.html - cover letter samples
www.quintcareers.com/cover_letter_tutorial.html - Cover Letter Tutorial
www.quintcareers.com/sample_internship_letter.html - Internship cover letter