**What should I Include in my Cover Letter?**

1. Introduce yourself, identify the position that you are applying for, and explain how you learned about the position.
2. Explain why you are qualified for the position, and why you would be a great fit for the job.
3. Close your Cover Letter by thanking the employer for their consideration, and request an interview to further discuss your qualifications.

**Useful Cover Letter Tips**

* Keep it brief – one page maximum
* Tailor the letter to match the requirements of the position

For example, “You mention that you are looking for people with Microsoft Office skills. Over the past summer I have worked extensively with MS PowerPoint, MS Word and MS Excel to draft professional documents.”

* Stress how you will add to the organization
* Be specific
* Focus on three qualities that distinguish who you are (e.g., hard worker, willing to learn, organized)
* Project confidence and be positive
* If possible, personalize your letter to the hiring manager and ensure correct spelling of their name
* Check for spelling or grammatical errors
* Show your personality, curiosity, and interest in the field of work rather than repeating your resume word for word
* Research and learn about the company or organization you are applying to. If your cover letter is tailored to the company and job, you’ll show the employer that you can be a good fit.

A good place to start...[Youth Canada (Links to an external site.)](http://www.youth.gc.ca/eng/topics/jobs/cover.shtml) has advice on writing a resume and lists many do's and don'ts that are applicable to cover letters as well.

Have a look at these [sample resumes & cover letters](https://nides.instructure.com/courses/1042/files/421148/download?wrap=1)**.** What do you notice is important information in each cover letter?

Cover letters can be the deciding factor between getting called for an interview or being passed up for another candidate who submitted something better. To make sure *your* cover letter helps *you* land the interview, keep these do's and don’ts in mind when you're writing:

* **Do** create a personalized cover letter [(Links to an external site.)](https://www.pongoresume.com/features/letter-builder.cfm)for every company and position.
* **Do** take the time to find out the hiring manager's name, and open the letter with a proper greeting.
* **Do** identify the position you're applying for, including the job code or reference number (if there is one).
* **Do** maintain a confident, enthusiastic tone.
* **Do** proofread repeatedly (typos and grammatical mistakes are a huge turn-off)!
* **Do** ask someone you trust to critique and proofread your cover letter.
* **Do** end with a statement of intent (e.g., I will be in touch on Tuesday to discuss the possibility of an interview).
* **Don't** go beyond one page. In most cases, three or four paragraphs are enough to tell your story.
* **Don't** try to be cute. Humor is subjective; it can make you seem unprofessional rather than personable.
* **Don't** resort to cliches, exaggerations, or false flattery.
* **Don’t** assume spell check will catch all errors!
* **Don't** simply repeat claims you made in your resume. Instead, highlight the most impressive accomplishments from your resume and describe the story behind them.
* **Don't** forget to change the recipient's name and company name for each cover letter you write!