How to Write A COVER LETTER

January 12, 2014
Robert Jenkins
Human Resources Director
Name of Company
123 N. Main Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Mr. Jenkins:

1st Paragraph: State what position you are applying for and where you found the posting. Express your interest in the opportunity and the specific reasons for your interest. If someone within the company told you about the opportunity, this would be an excellent place to mention their name. However make certain that this person is okay with you doing so beforehand.

2nd Paragraph: The body of your letter may be more than one paragraph in length, but remember your cover letter should not exceed one page. If a cover letter is too long, an employer will be less likely to read it. In the body of your letter, you need to give specific examples of why you are a good fit for the position and the company. Employers want to know that you are qualified for the opportunity and that you are unique from other candidates. This is your opportunity to market yourself, your skills, and your abilities. Be certain to re-read the job description to determine how your education and experience has prepared you for each area mentioned by the employer.

3rd Paragraph: Your closing needs to be STRONG! Don’t let them doubt that you would make a good candidate. Here you want to mention that you feel you are a great fit for the position and look forward to further discussing this opportunity. Optional: Let them know that you will call to follow up on your resume at a specific time to answer any questions. This lets them know that you are VERY interested in the position, and you MUST call them and follow up.

Sincerely,
Josh Boshman

January 28, 2015
Robert Moore
Human Resources Director
ABC Engineering
123 N. Main Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Mr. Moore:

I am responding to the Electrical Engineering position at ABC Engineering that was recently posted on the Engineering and Technology Career Services website at Indiana University, Purdue University in Indianapolis. I am currently a senior majoring in Electrical Engineering with an anticipated graduation date of May 2015. I recently completed an electrical engineering internship with Indianapolis Power and Light (IPL). My internship taught me how to successfully analyze equipment and, if applicable, the reason why the equipment failed according to data analysis. The Engineering design studies at IPL expanded my knowledge of electrical engineering outside of the classroom. Since your organization has similar criteria for electrical engineering positions, I feel that I am confident for this position.

In addition to my internship experience at IPL, I have had experience with leading various project implementations and providing Customer Relationship Management solutions during my time at Cummins Corporation. I now possess a deeper understanding of how to utilize my engineering skills in order to deliver solutions that will meet the business requirements of ABC Engineering.

I feel certain that my strong initiative and commitment to excellence, coupled with demonstrated experience in electrical engineering, will be of value to your organization. Should you agree, after reviewing my enclosed resume, I would like to schedule a meeting in order to further discuss your needs for the electrical engineering position.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Stanley Cupp

Find Out More At: www.etcareers.iupui.edu
Understand what the Cover Letter Must Achieve
You are trying to motivate a specific action - an invitation for an interview. A cover letter provides you with the opportunity to:
• Demonstrate your desire to work for the employer
• Identify specific ways your expertise can benefit the organization
• Differentiate yourself from other job seekers
• Demonstrate your individual personality
• Explain anomalies that may stand out in a resume such as gaps in employment
• Arouse interest that will help you get that interview

Highlight what is Most Relevant
A cover letter should be brief and to the point. It should be no longer than one page, 3 or 4 paragraphs at most, and should include your signature. Recruiters are pressed for time and often only have time to skim through applications. Highlight skills and experiences that are most relevant to the job opening and provide concrete examples of the skills, training, and/or experiences that are the basis for your confidence. Make sure that the messaging in your letter is consistent with the information included in your resume. Your cover letter should not be a laundry list of items from your resume.

Know Your Stuff
Each cover letter should be customized for each individual employer and include a statement about why you are attracted to the position and company. Before you begin writing your letter, learn as much as you can about the potential employer. Remember, you want to express what you can do for the employer, not what they can do for you.

Check Grammar and Spelling
The smallest grammatical error on your part can call your professionalism and attention to detail into question thereby discouraging a hiring manager from contacting you for an interview. Always spell-check your document and ask friends and family members to proof read your letter before sending it to any potential employer.

Make it Personal
Never begin a cover letter with “to whom it may concern” A generic salutation often signals to potential employers that you lack the initiative to locate the appropriate contact. Instead, call the company directly and explain the position you are applying for to see if you can fill in the blank or take time to research on the internet or in appropriate business periodicals to get the name and title of the hiring official.

Be Strong, Confident and Professional
A good cover letter begins with a powerful, clearly written opening paragraph. Briefly describe how you heard about the position and why you’re interested in it. Your tone should be confident without being arrogant. Avoid attempts to be “cute” or “catchy” in your opening. Gimmicky attempts to gain attention can appear insincere. It is best to keep your letter polished and professional as well as interesting and visually appealing. Mention only positive things and be formal, yet friendly and open.

Cover Letters Tips:
• Have your header match the one on your resume
• If you don’t know the name of the person, address the letter to Hiring Manager
• The first paragraph is used to tell the Recruiter how you heard about the position; this is where you tell them if you were referred by someone and who that person is
• The second and third paragraphs take your experiences and match them to the requirements in the position description with examples.
• The closing paragraph asks for an interview
• Be sure to include a closing with your signature

Office of Career Service and Professional Development, ET 101 www.etcareers.iupui.edu