

## WRITING YOUR COVER LETTER

Cover letters introduce your story and create a first impression for employers. They link your resume to the position, showcase your knowledge of the organization and highlight related skills. Start by researching the organization, considering what interests you and what you have to offer.

Address  
City, State Postal Code



This is your current address and should align with your name below

Date

Name of Contact Person  
Title  
Organization Name  
Address  
City, State Postal Code



Address to a specific individual. Watch titles (i.e., use “Ms.” for women, regardless of marital status). If you are unable to locate a specific individual, you may use Dear Selection Committee, Dear Human Resources Manager or Dear Internship Coordinator.

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Smith:

**1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph**-The main purpose of the first paragraph is to introduce yourself and to specify the position for which you would like to be considered. You want to grab the employer’s attention. Based on your research, indicate why you are interested in this position and/or this organization. If responding to a published ad, mention the date and name of the publication. Use your networking skills. If someone referred you to the organization (a current employee in good standing, a professor, a friend) include his or her name in the first sentence. Finally, indicate that you attend Morgan State University and provide information about your major and anticipated graduation date.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph**-Tell the employer your story. Describe your qualifications as they relate to the desired position using specific examples from academic, internship, volunteer, and/or co-curricular experience. Connect your accomplishments, skills and knowledge directly to the type of position, organization and/or field.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph**-Summarize or give a final statement of interest. Include your phone number and/or email address for the employer’s easy reference. Thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your Signature)

Type Your Name

Encl.

*Source: University of Michigan, The Career Center*

# COVER LETTER WORKSHEET

Paragraph 1: State the name of the position and any pertinent information such as the vacancy number and where the job was posted. Why are you interested in this position/this organization? (demonstrate you did your research)

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Paragraph 2 (optional 3): Be specific about how your education and experience(s) would be an asset to the organization. (Describe how you can assist the organization and its clients) based on your interests, skills and abilities.

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Last Paragraph: What final point do you want to make?

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## *Quick Tips:*

- Use LinkedIn/Glassdoor.com and the organization's Web site to gather information for your cover letter. Focus on skills and attributes the employer is seeking in applicants. Discuss these skills in the body of your cover letter.
- Letters addressed to a specific person demonstrate a higher level of investment and enthusiasm for the position; so try to find the name of the person you want to read your letter.
- Cover letters also showcase your writing abilities. Therefore, it is imperative that your cover letters be error-free and grammatically sound. Avoid beginning every sentence with an "I" statement.
- Underline the verbs in the job posting to identify key skills.

## *Quick Formatting Tips:*

<i>Font</i>	10 to 12 point, in the same font as your resume
<i>Paper</i>	The same as your resume; quality bond resume paper in white or ivory
<i>Margins</i>	1 or 1.25 inches
<i>Layout</i>	Left justified, beginning no more than 2 inches from the top
<i>Style</i>	Positive language, confident but not imposing, concise with supporting detail, written in active voice
<i>Email</i>	Use body of email as cover letter starting with salutation

Want to learn more about presenting your story? Meet with a career counselor/advisor today!