Opening & Closing a Cover Letter:
Your contact information (full name, address, phone number, & e-mail) should be at the top of the page to create a cohesive appearance in your documents.

The employer’s heading:

- Date
- Dr./Mr./Ms. First Last Name
- Title
- Company or Organization
- Street Address
- City, State, Zip Code

Closing:

- Sincerely,
  (Use this space to sign hard copies.)
- First and Last Name

The Body:

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Paragraph 1: State the position in which you are interested and how you found the opening. You can also state why you are interested in that company if there are not open positions posted. This is also the place to mention a name of a personal contact at the company, if applicable.

Paragraphs 2 & 3: Explain how your qualifications and experiences fit the needs of the position as listed in the posting. Focus on how you can contribute to the organization and aim to highlight at least two of your attributes per paragraph.

Paragraph 4: Restate your interest in the position. Thank the employer for their consideration, and end by welcoming them to contact you via phone or e-mail. Also indicate how you plan to follow up.

Cover Letter Tips and Tricks:

- Each letter should be original and tailored to the position for which you are applying.
- Use the cover letter to express how the experiences on your resume relate to the position and benefit the organization.
- Your cover letter should be three to four short paragraphs on one page.
  - Each paragraph should be 4-8 lines.
- Paragraphs should NOT be indented.
- All text (except your contact information) should be flush to the left margin.
Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. Last Name:

It is best if you can start with a sentence that expresses your interest and enthusiasm for the organization and/or the position for which you are applying. Then mention some strengths or experiences you have that make you a great candidate for this position. If someone recommended you or suggested you apply for this position, and/or there are specific reasons why you are excited about this organization, do not be shy—state this. This opening paragraph is a perfect place to mention something that has impressed you about this organization (e.g., something you read on their website or in a recent news article). This shows that you have done your research.

The middle paragraph (or two) should focus on the skills and experiences you have that are most relevant to the job for which you are applying. (Hint: it is a good idea to use some of the words and phrases that appear in the job posting/position description.) Be specific—describe how you have applied your skills previously and what you accomplished/contributed in your previous experiences. Next, state how you look forward to using these skills and strengths to help this organization. Keep each paragraph between 4 and 8 lines to prevent the reader from becoming overwhelmed.

In your last paragraph, write about what you would like to happen next (i.e. an interview or opportunity to talk about this position further). Provide information for how you can be reached, whether it is by email, phone number, or both (include this information in this sentence). Unless the job posting specifically states not to, you can write that you plan to follow up in a week or two via phone or email. Thank them for their time and consideration. Make sure that your cover letter is no longer than a page.

Sincerely,

Your name signed here in black ink (if turning in hard copy)