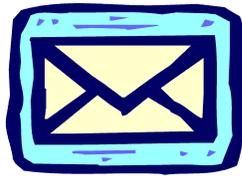


COVER LETTERS



A letter always accompanies your résumé

A cover letter is *never* a form letter.

- always type/word process; the letter should be neat, easy to read and interesting
- the letter is addressed to an individual, never sir or ma'am or to whom it may concern
- the letter is concise and grabs the attention of the reader; the reader may lose interest if they must read through irrelevant information
- the letter tells the reader the purpose, sells the reader on the need to hire you and directs the reader to the résumé
- your letter is prepared in business format, error free, elegantly designed, on quality paper which complements or matches your résumé
- letters should be targeted to the specific organization you are interested in; discuss how your skills match organizational needs

Edit and Proofread Your Letter!

Have someone else read it! Check for misspellings, omissions or improper grammar. Reread for content, clarity and relevance to the job description. Check that your emphasis parallels that of the ad or job description: if organizational skills come first in the job description or ad, demonstrate your organizational capabilities first; if computer skills come next, and you don't have any, be aware (and apply anyway) that those computer skills are in high priority.

Reread again -is it an interesting letter?

Would you want to read your letter?

SUNY Cortland Career Services

B-7 Van Hoesen Hall
Cortland, NY 13045
(607)753-4715



Continued on other side

There are many different types and styles of letters - remember, this is YOUR letter!

Here's one sample:

Your mailing address
Your phone number
Correct date

Correctly spelled name and title
Organization
Complete address

Dear Person's Name:

Opening paragraph: The opening paragraph should arouse the interest of the employer. State why you are writing and why you're interested in this organization. State the source of your information (drop a name, mention a personal connection to the organization, location of advertisement, etc).

Body paragraph: Arouse the interest of the reader by presenting skills and achievements that meet his/her need. Briefly state accomplishments, highlighting what you can do for the organization. Discuss skills, personal attributes and unique qualifications - how could you assist the organization? Personalize and target your descriptions to the company or school district. Four or five items should be sufficient.

Body paragraph: Refer the reader to your resume for a more detailed description of your experience and background. Note other items that may be included (completed application, writing sample, etc).

Closing paragraph: State future action desired: If you wish to call them in two weeks to arrange a convenient time to interview, say so, and remember to call! Tell how you can be reached for an interview and make sure you can be reached. If additional materials are needed, state that you will be glad to supply them. Be sure to say thank you!

Sincerely,

(Your signature)

John Q. Public

(Your name typed)