

COVER LETTERS & MORE



COVER LETTERS

A cover letter serves as an introduction to your resume and allows you to convey your interest for a specific position.

- Research the organization to discover its needs and the desired qualifications for applicants.
- Identify qualities you possess that the company is seeking and provide examples that demonstrate these qualities.
- Connect selected skills/experiences/keywords on your resume to the job description and employer expectations. Expand on these points by providing specific details or examples.
- When sending your cover letter electronically, it is your preference to use the text of your cover letter as the body of the email with a resume attachment OR send a short email with your cover letter and resume as attachments.
- Convey enthusiasm and set a positive tone.
- Address letters to an individual by name and title, if possible.
- Limit your letter to one page.
- Proofread for spelling, typographical, and grammatical errors. DO NOT rely on spell check.
- Have a draft critiqued by XPD staff.

Letter of Inquiry - write to INQUIRE about possible positions.

Letter of Application - write to APPLY for a specific position that you know is available.

THANK-YOU NOTE

Write a thank-you note/email to all prospective employers after an interview or contact. This letter/note is a basic courtesy that can help you stand out among the candidates. Also, write a note to anyone who assists in your search.

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE/DECLINATION

Review your understanding of the details of the agreement and express your appreciation for the offer. Indicate if you are accepting or declining the offer.

TIPS FOR E-MAILING CORRESPONDENCE

- List your name and the title of the internship/job for which you are applying in the subject line.
- Address your career contact formally (at least in the first e-mail). "Dear Ms. Jones" is a proper salutation. Verify spelling and gender.
- Forget everything texting or messaging has taught you! Use proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. Avoid abbreviations.
- Use plain text; no fancy fonts or backgrounds.

GET STARTED

- View samples of various types of correspondence:
www.csbsju.edu/xpd/students
(click on "How To...")
- To get started, stop in to the XPD Resource Centers and talk with a Career Assistant.
- Get it critiqued by a Career Assistant or Career Coach.

TAKE THE EXTRA STEP

- Make personal contacts (via phone or in person) whenever possible.
- After e-mailing your application materials, follow up with a phone call.
- Ask the contact if she/he has had time to review your materials, and offer to answer any questions she/he may have.

CSB OFFICE

Clemens Library
320-363-5707

XPD – EXPERIENCE & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

www.csbsju.edu/xpd
Open Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

SJU OFFICE

Mary Hall 10 and 25
320-363-3236

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A LETTER OF APPLICATION

Street Address or P.O. Box Number
City, State Zip Code
Date (written out in full, never abbreviated)

Your Address
written on first
line below

Name of person, Title
Name of organization
Address or P.O. Box (no abbreviations)
City, State Zip Code

Inside Address,
written on sixth line below top
margin. Use the organization's
style of spelling, punctuation,
capitalization, spacing and
abbreviation.

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. last name (do not include first name):
Example: Dear Ms. Johnson,

Salutation

First paragraph: This paragraph typically includes: 1) State why you are writing (i.e. a particular position for which you would like to be considered). 2) Note how you heard about the position or became interested in the organization. 3) Mention the name of any contacts who have referred you to the position. 4) End the paragraph with a strong statement regarding why you would make an excellent candidate.

Second paragraph: The message in this paragraph highlights the experiences listed on your resume and other aspects of your experiences that have prepared you for the specific requirements of the position for which you are applying. Draw connections between your skills and experiences and the employer's needs (job description).

Third paragraph: Demonstrate that you have researched the company and know about their mission, products/services, trends, and employment needs, but do not write this paragraph solely focused on the organization (they already know who they are). Rather, connect your skills, experiences, and goals to the research and demonstrate how you could add value to the organization.

Conclusion (last paragraph): This paragraph explains what you want to happen next. It is your opportunity to request an interview and indicate when you will follow-up to discuss the next step. It is also an opportunity to reaffirm your interest in the position and to thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your signature goes here;
if sending document
electronically, you can use a
cursive handwriting font to
sign your name.

Your name typed

TIPS ON ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

- Your electronic communication must be very professional; these messages will be another demonstration of your communication skills. If an email message is taking the place of your cover letter, omit the address information and begin with the salutation (Dear...). Include your resume as an attachment (PDF).