

9 Cover Letter Tips for Students

A cover letter gives you the perfect opportunity to go beyond your resume and convey to employers why you are interested in the job and how your background will enable you to excel at the position. For students or recent graduates with limited work experience, there are several things you can do in a cover letter to demonstrate that you are a motivated candidate.



1. Carefully Research the Job and Company

Prior to writing your cover letter, spend some time carefully reading the job description, researching the position title, and exploring the company online. You want to determine the skills, knowledge, experience, and personal qualities required for success in the role and apply this information throughout your cover letter.

3. Go Beyond Your Resume

The body of your cover letter should not reiterate the information listed in your resume, but rather add to it. You want your cover letter to complement your resume by offering extra details about your experience and skills that really make the case for your employment with the company.

5. Showcase Your Skills

If you know you have the potential to do the job but have limited work experience, try focusing on transferable skills instead. Brainstorm past projects, assignments, or responsibilities that illustrate how you've demonstrated these skills in a real-world scenario and explain how you'd apply them to the position.

7. Use Action Verbs

When discussing your experience and skills, use action verbs to demonstrate your past responsibilities and accomplishments. For example, use words like increased, analyzed, and composed to portray your achievements in a dynamic and engaging way.

9. Have Someone Do a Gut Check

Take your cover letter to a teacher, career counselor, writing center, or friend and ask them two questions: Does this sell me as the best person for the job? Is this engaging and exciting? If the answer to either question is "no" or there is even slight hesitation, it's time to revise and edit your cover letter.

2. Craft an Engaging Opening Statement

The first sentence of your cover letter may be your only opportunity to pique the hiring manager's interest. Grab their attention by starting with a strong statement of interest that conveys your enthusiasm for the position. You can do this by discussing your passion for the job requirements, your love of the company, or your accomplishments. Don't be afraid to get creative!

4. Highlight the Right Experiences

Your goal in a cover letter is to show how you would be valuable to the company, describing the experience you bring that would allow you to perform well in the position. Use academic achievements, internships, volunteer work, and leadership experience to show how you can deliver on the requirements listed in the job description.

6. Use Short Paragraphs

Limiting your cover letter paragraphs to seven or fewer lines allows the hiring manager to quickly scan your document without being overwhelmed by large blocks of text. Shorter paragraphs also force you to be more concise with your thoughts and produce a more organized, professional cover letter overall.

8. Close Strong

Your closing paragraph is your last chance to affirm your enthusiasm for the position and explain how you'd be a perfect match for the company. Craft a strong, short, and sweet statement that promises something of real value to the hiring manager. Don't forget to thank them for their time and consideration!

