

# **COVER LETTER BASICS**

The cover letter plays an important role in your job search. The purpose of the cover letter is to introduce yourself to a prospective employer and explain why you are sending a resume. The letter should be tailored to fit a specific job with a specific employer and state your skills and abilities as they apply to that particular job. In this letter you focus on the contribution you can make to the company and present yourself in a positive and professional manner.

Within the contents of the cover letter, several components should be mentioned, including why you are writing, contributions you believe you can make to the organization based on your qualifications, your enthusiasm for the position and your interest in obtaining an interview. Because the cover letter is often an initial contact between you and the potential employer, it's important that the contents of your letter make a great first impression.

## **TIPS:**

- ❖ Be 100% Honest.
- ❖ Personalize each cover letter to the specific company and position you are applying for.
- ❖ Brief and to the point, 3-4 paragraphs and one page.
- ❖ Neat, well organized, and typed.
- ❖ Proofread, proofread, proofread.
- ❖ Consistent, use the same paper and font for the cover letter and resume.
- ❖ Refer to 3-5 specific accomplishments or skills that the employer is looking for and you have.
- ❖ Research the company and position for a more effective letter.
- ❖ Visit the Career Center at Sacramento City College to get assistance with your cover letter.

## **Don't:**

- ❖ Send a generic letter to multiple companies.
- ❖ Make your letter flowery and confusing to read and understand.
- ❖ Claim to be the ideal candidate.

## **When should you include a cover letter?**

Always, unless they have specifically asked you not to send one. A cover letter, in addition to your resume, puts you a step above all other resumes submitted without a cover letter. It shows you have put an extra effort into obtaining an interview and have an invested interest in the position.



**First and Last Name**

5397 Outlier Way  
Sacramento, CA 95841  
(916) 000-000 • student@scc.losrios.edu

Date:

Employer Name (Contact Person)  
Proper Business Title  
Company's Name  
Street Address  
City, State, ZIP Code

Dear Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ (or) Dear Hiring Manager:

1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph: State the position you are applying for and the title of company/organization. State how you heard about the position (contact person/referral, employee website, job posting).

2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph: is your time to shine. Describe why you are qualified to work for the company (education and/or experience). Provide specific examples about how you have gained skills and experience that may relate to the position. Do not underplay your experiences, many skills are transferrable. Show the employer why you are the best candidate.

3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph (optional): After researching and obtaining information about the company, state why you want to work for them specifically. This should be tailored uniquely to each company/organization. Express why you would be the perfect fit for the organization and show your excitement about working for them.

4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph: Conclude your letter by thanking the employer for taking the time to review your resume/application. Let them know that they can contact you if they have any further questions and indicate how you can be reached (include your email and phone number.) State that you look forward to hearing from them.

Sincerely,

Your Signature in Black Ink

Your typed Name

Enclosure: Resume



**John Banks**  
5397 Outlier Way  
Sacramento, CA 95841  
(916) 000-000 • student@scc.losrios.edu

October 8, 2013

Mary Jones  
Store Manager  
1701 Arden Way  
Sacramento, CA 95815

Dear Ms. Jones:

I am writing to express my interest in the Sales Associate Position at Macy's. I heard about this position through the hiring manager Bob Langley, who I met at the Sacramento City College Career Fair.

I am currently a student at Sacramento City College and working towards an Associate of Science Degree in Marketing. My anticipated graduation date is in spring of 2014 and I was pleased to learn about this opportunity. I believe my courses in retailing, selling professionally and advertising have equipped me for this position. In addition to these courses, I have gained customer service experience during my employment at Jack's Urban Eats. I displayed multitasking skills by working in a fast paced environment which included accurately taking orders, receiving payment, preparing meals, and serving customers. I gained recognition for being in the Top 5 in the district to obtain excellent customer reviews. I am a strong advocate for meeting the customer's needs and I go out of my way to ensure customer satisfaction.

I am particularly interested in working for Macy's because I believe it is a department store that not only sells quality products and clothing, but also cares about the community. I was delighted to learn that Macy's raised more than 6 million dollars to support the Cancer Research Foundation, since 2000. In addition, I was excited to learn about the company's partnership with Make-A-Wish Foundation, since I am very involved in and passionate about that foundation. This shows me that Macys' goal align with my vision for granting joy to children with life threatening conditions. I would be honored to work at a company that provides quality clothes, products and is giving back to the community.

I appreciate you taking the time to review my application. If you have any further questions, I can be reached at (916) 444-4444 or by email student@scc.losrios.edu. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

John Bank

