

Parts of a Cover Letter

A cover letter is a one page document. Despite its brevity, it's a very *important* letter so it may take you several tries to achieve the best result. A cover letter is limited to 3-4 paragraphs, each with a distinct purpose.

First Paragraph: The Purpose

Why are you writing?

- The name of the position
- Where you found out about it (website or personal referral)
- Does the company have an internship program?
- Indicate why you are interested in the position or the company
- Show evidence of research

Middle Paragraph: The Proof

Why you and not any of the other zillion candidates?

- Cite specific accomplishments relevant to the job description
- Highlight any special skills, experience and background which might not appear on your resume (projects, coursework, collaborations)
- Avoid regurgitating what's already on your resume

Last Paragraph: The Close

What do you want?

- Mention what is enclosed (resume, samples digital portfolio)
- Indicate your interest in an interview, an opportunity to have your portfolio reviewed (whatever applies)
- Specify how to reach you
- Include the dates you'll be visiting the area, if you're from out of town
- Specify when you will follow-up with a phone call (and then follow-through)