

D3 Cover Letter Tips

As all job seekers know, a cover letter accompanies your professional resume when you apply for an open position. It is your personal introduction to a prospective employer outlining your interest in the advertised position and the organization, and expressing why you are qualified for the specific position. A cover letter is not a summary of your resume; rather, it is a "movie trailer" whose function is to make a potential employer want to read and review your resume.

Each cover letter should be tailored to a specific job description and organization. Show how you meet the required qualifications for that particular job by emphasizing the two or three strongest reasons why you are a compelling candidate. Illustrate what you know about the organization/industry, and demonstrate why you are a good fit. Use confident language, write in an active voice, and, except in rare circumstances, limit your letter to one page.

The accompanying D3 general guidelines will help you craft professional cover letters and statements to prospective employers.

Introductory Paragraph

- Introduce yourself – who are you and why are you writing?
- Make a connection – why do you want to work for the employer? What appeals to you about the opportunity for which you are applying?
- Summarize your strengths – highlight strengths, skills, and attributes on which you will elaborate in the middle paragraphs of your cover letter;
- A well-written introductory paragraph can often stand alone as an abstract of your candidacy.

Middle Paragraphs

- Do not simply restate your resume; explain how the experiences listed in your resume demonstrate your qualifications;
- Elaborate on related experiences, coursework, or activities to provide specific examples to demonstrate skills and attributes the employer is seeking;
- These paragraphs should answer the following question: what can you bring to the position and employer?

Concluding Paragraph

- Reiterate your interest in the employer and position;
- Focus on next steps, such as requesting an interview.

Format and Style

- Include the date, employer name, and contact information at the top of the letter;
- Begin your letter with a formal salutation, such as "Dear Mr. Jones." If you are unsure of the contact person's gender, type out the full name;
- Conclude your correspondence with "Sincerely," "Best Regards," or similar closing, with your name on the following line. Make sure to include your contact information (phone, email address, LinkedIn profile hyperlink);
- The cover letter should not exceed one page, and four to five paragraphs are ideal. If your letter is too long or too dense you run the risk of it not being read;
- Proofread – make sure your cover letter is free of grammatical and spelling errors;
- The font should match your resume and sized at 11 or 12 points. Margins are typically 1-inch on all sides.

Additional D3 Information

For additional information and insight concerning cover letters, please consult with a D3 representative. As industry leaders in legal staffing, we pride ourselves on offering our expert commentary and analysis of a wide range of subjects affecting a candidates' employment search. www.d3legalsearch.com