

Cover Letters: A Cuesta College Career Connections Guide

Cover Letters: Basic Guidelines

- Use the same contact information as your resume
- Should be one page in length, standard typing paper size (8 ½ inch by 11 inch)
- The cover letter should have .5 inch to 1-inch margins
- The paper should be white (no colors)
- Don't start every sentence with "I" (remember: You're focusing on how you can contribute to **the organization's** needs, not yours)
- Address the person directly if you know who will be reviewing your application. If you don't know the specific person, use **Dear Hiring Committee**.
- Use Standard Business format and professional language

Cover Letters: Content

For your first paragraph: Content should be focused on **"Why Them?"**

- Describe what position you're applying for and how you found the position
- Highlight what interests you about the company (This demonstrates that you've taken the time to research them and know about their goals.
- End paragraph with two to three reasons why you're a good fit for this position

For your second paragraph: Content should be focused on **"Why You?"**.

- Provide concrete examples of the 2-3 reasons you just listed about why you're qualified for the position
- Include specific experiences or academic highlights that directly relate to the qualifications that the employer is seeking.
- Close the paragraph with a summary sentence of your qualifications and a confident statement about how you would make a positive contribution to the organization.

For your third paragraph: Focus on **"Next Steps"**

- Reiterate your interest in the position and thank employers for taking the time to read your cover letter and consider you for the position.
- Reference any additional documents you have submitted in addition to your cover letter: Resume, certifications, etc.
- Indicate how and when the employer can contact you and that you look forward to hearing from them.

Complete Packet: Additional Documents to Include with Application

Here are some additional documents that are sometimes required in addition to a cover letter:

- Resume
- Application (Electronic or paper)
- Supporting Documents (Depending on the position)
 1. Required Certifications
 2. CPR Card
 3. Licenses
 4. Other (letters of recommendation, etc.)

Be sure to check the job description for any additional document requests.

Questions?

Contact the Career Connections team for more guidance on cover letter writing:
CareerConnections@cuesta.edu