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**How to Write a Job–Winning Cover Letter**

**By Brett Krkosska**

**How to Write a Job–Winning Cover Letter by Brett Krkosska**

Let me say that I've done more hiring and firing in my days than I care to admit. And although Human Resource Managers and recruiters all have their own way of doing things, here was my approach to looking at new applicants...

**A Good Resume Invites Recruiters to Read Your Cover Letter**

I always looked at the person's resume first. I quickly breezed over qualifications and employment history. If they looked promising in these areas, then I would look at the cover letter.

The cover letter gave me further insight into the person, e.g. how organized they are by examining the presentation of the letter, whether or not they had taken the time to find out anything about my company, whether or not they have had or do have any ties to the company, whether or not they have specified the job they want, will they travel, and so on.

What all this means is you need both a resume and a cover letter. The meat is in the resume. I wanted the facts and I wanted 'em fast. If a person looked promising from the resume, then I read the cover letter, and then I call 'em in for an interview. That's where the rubber meets the road.

**The Goal of a Cover Letter**

So, this brings up your goal in creating a cover letter ...

## How to Write a Job–Winning Cover Letter

... to introduce yourself to the company and to sell yourself.

If you do this well enough, you are at the top of the list for an interview, assuming you are qualified for the position.

### Creating a Strong Cover Letter

1. Make it short. Definitely no more than one page. Half a page is better. Two paragraphs is even better. If you can

whittle it down to that and make your case succinctly, then you are proving yourself to be a great communicator. That's a huge bonus in my book.

2. Be professional and concise. Never try to be humorous. Keep your tone on a "business only" level.

3. Always put yourself in the best light and never give hints that you may be underqualified, even if you think you are.

4. Never mention work experience in the cover letter that isn't included on your resume. This no–no equals an automatic strike out.

5. Make sure it contains no typos or poor grammar. Have someone proof your letter before using it.

6. Know what you are applying for. Be specific. Know the job title. Never say you'll take anything available. You are a professional. State the job title you are wanting to be considered for in the first paragraph of your cover letter.

7. I always asked candidates why they wanted to work for me. This is where they had the opportunity to impress me by saying something like: "Because your company is the largest retailer of wireless communication devices, I feel strongly that I should position my future with a leader in the industry." Do you see what I mean? I want to know that they have done a little research. I want to know that they understand my business and at the same time they see an opportunity for self–fulfillment within my company. This is information you include in the first paragraph of the cover letter.

8. Next, I want to know how a candidate will contribute to my company. This is paragraph number two. I want to know specifically how your set of skills and past experiences will directly impact the company. This is the "What can you do for the company?" section.

9. Never conclude a letter with a flippant "I hope you call me" type of ending. Always specify a date that you will follow-up with the company and how you will follow-up.

Applying these tips will help you to be a step ahead of the pack. Recruiters routinely discard many applicants based solely on a poor written cover letter and resume. Since your goal is to get in the door for an interview, taking the time to create a winning cover letter is a

tactic you can't afford to skip!

Brett Krkosska provides 'how-to' advice on family and home-based work issues. Get start-up guidance, business ideas and inspiration at: <http://homebiztools.com> Free ezine subscription: <mailto:enews@homebiztools.com>

### **7 Tips for Writing Winning Resume Cover Letters**

**By Donna Monday**

Writing a good resume cover letter is something you should seriously consider when preparing to send off your resume to potential employers.

Here are seven important cover letter writing tips:

Address the individual by name. If you don't know their name then use: "Dear Sir or Madam" or "Dear Human Resources Director".

Attract attention with a strong opening paragraph. Create impact. Give them a reason to keep reading about you.

Refer to your enclosed resume. Be specific in describing your skills, experience and accomplishments. Use actual examples of things you've done.

Let the employer know what you can do for them. What can you bring to their organization?

Keep the letter's tone of voice positive and professional. Be persuasive but don't come off like a cheap used car salesman. Remember to ask for the interview!

## How to Write a Job–Winning Cover Letter

Double check your spelling, grammar, and sentence structure. Have someone proofread the letter.

Sign your letter and keep a copy for your files.

Writing a strong cover letter will help you (and your resume) stand out from the crowd. Hopefully, your cover letter will give employers a reason to pick up the phone and invite you to that all–important job interview.

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Donna Monday writes employment related articles for

7 Tips for Writing Winning Resume Cover Letters  
Nuts and Bolts of Effective Cover Letters  
How Beneficial is a Sample Cover Letter ?  
Resume and Cover Letter - A Dynamic Duo  
Beat the Crowd with Winning Resume Cover Letters

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