



PREPARING FOR YOUR CAREER

APPLYING FOR A JOB

Cover Letter

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Application Supporting Documents

The most common supporting documents are:

- Cover Letter
- Professional References List
- Follow-up Letter
- Thank you Letter



Spending extra time on these supporting documents helps you stand out from the crowd & shows the employer you are enthusiastic about the opportunity.



Cover Letter

- A typical hiring manager does not read cover letter before the application.
- They generally spend 10 to 15 seconds scanning your application.
- If they like what they see, they will read more.



Cover Letter

- A cover letter should...
 - focus on company's needs and how you meet their needs.
 - reflect your understanding of the company & its needs.
 - point out how your knowledge and skills fill those needs.



Cover Letter Tips



- **Biggest mistake:**
 - mass producing your resume & cover letter
 - sending resume & cover letter to hundreds of employers.
- **Employers receive numerous resumes & applications daily.**
- **They do not have time to thoroughly read every application or resume.**



Cover Letter Tips



Your cover letter should be specific and personal.

- Research & identify the hiring manager.
- Typically found on their website in the ‘About Us’ section.
- You can also call the company’s Human Resources department.
- Make sure their name & title are spelled correctly.
- Use their title, address, email address & telephone number on the letter.
- This allows you to send the letter directly to them.



Cover Letter Tips

- Keep cover letter to **one page** with **three key paragraphs**:
 - **Introduction** (Why you are writing),
 - **Your Benefits** (What you can do for the company)
 - **Closing** (Next step).
- Focus tone of letter on what you can do for the company.
- What skills and experience you can bring to the company & how they would benefit from hiring you.



Email Cover Letter

If you submit application, resume & cover letter electronically, submit each individual document as an **attachment**.

- Do not write cover letter in the email message.
- Usually a HR support person is responsible for processing applications before forwarding them to the hiring manager.
- The hiring manager might not see cover letter if it is in initial email message.



525 Hampton Rd., Tampa, FL 33610 – (111) 123-4567

April 28, 2008

Mr. Scott Thompson, CFO
Thompson & Thompson, P.C.
6811 Citrus Blossom Drive
Tampa, Florida 33610

Dear Mr. Thompson:

After reading the wonderful article, "Giving Back," in the Sun Times about Thompson & Thompson's philanthropic work for charitable causes, I knew this was the place for me. I am also a passionate community volunteer who believes in promoting and improving the quality of life of others.

I bring to Thompson & Thompson three years of accounting experience working with the Director of Accounting for Smith & Hughes, one of Tampa's most highly regarded accounting firms. In this position, it was my privilege to learn every aspect of the accounts receivable and payable departments, including payroll, general ledgers and the preparation of year-end budgets.

More importantly, I developed exceptional organizational and interpersonal skills. As the Director's accounting assistant, I acted as liaison to clients, vendors and fellow accountants. This required me to manage multiple projects simultaneously, to follow-up on same and to report their progress at a moment's notice.

I will contact you next Monday, May 5th to schedule a meeting where we can discuss my qualifications further and how they meet the needs of Thompson & Thompson. Thank you for your time and I look forward to meeting you in person.

Sincerely,

Sue Anderson

Enclosures: Application for Employment
Resume

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Cover Letter Format



Cover letter should be typed using a standard business letter format.

Cover Letter Format:

- Return Address – Design cover letter to look like Personal Contact Information section of resume.
 - This will make cover letter look like a piece of customized stationery.
 - It also brands all of your documents and looks professional.



Cover Letter Format



- **Date** – Do not forget to put current date on all correspondence to an employer.
- **Inside Address** – Include hiring manager's name, title, company name & full mailing address.
- **Salutation** – Cover letter should be personalized to hiring manager (Dear Mr. Thompson).

Cover Letter Format



The body of a cover letter should include these elements:

- Introduction Paragraph – The first paragraph of cover letter should tell employer why you are writing.
 - Try to be creative to peak the employer’s interest to want to continue reading your letter.
 - Do not just state, “*I am applying for the position you had on your website.*”
 - Instead, write what led you to research the company & what makes them different.

Cover Letter Format



- Qualification Paragraph - Answer these questions in this paragraph:
 - What can you do for the company?
 - How do you benefit them?
- It is your opportunity to sell yourself!
 - Briefly state 3 to 4 related skills & qualifications for the position & highlight how they can benefit by hiring you.



Cover Letter Format



- Conclusion Paragraph – In this paragraph, state your next step to move the process forward.
 - Do not sit by phone & expect employer to call you.
 - Tell the employer when you will follow up & how.
 - For example, *“I will contact you next week to schedule an in-person meeting or see if you have any questions or need additional information.”*

Always follow through on what you say you will do!

Cover Letter Format



- **Closing** - Always end the correspondence with ‘Sincerely’ as the closing; anything else would be unprofessional.
 - If you print Cover Letter, remember to sign it.
 - You do not need a signature on an electronic cover letter attached to an email.

