THE COVER LETTER

- Introduces your resume to the employer.
- Is an opportunity for you to sell yourself and show why you would be great for the job in question.
- Can include ‘other information’ about yourself that is not appropriate for a resume.

PREPARATION FOR WRITING – Remember that there is not a “one size fits all” cover letter. Each cover letter should be tailored to the job opening for which you are applying. These tips can help you prepare:

1. **Job and employer analysis:** Gather all the information you can about the prospective employer and the job you are targeting within that company. Your best sources are the job description itself and the company/agency website.

2. **Self-analysis:** Know yourself well enough that you can clearly articulate your skills through your writing.

3. **Review:** Consider your self-analysis/resume as it relates to the qualifications of each job you target. Thus, you can customize your letter to the position.

FORMAT – A neat cover letter with proper layout and spacing will create a positive impression and make the employer want to read the letter.

**Important elements are:**

1. **Introductory paragraph:** Its purpose is to state your interest in the particular position for which you are applying (make sure you name the position). In addition, you will want to inform the reader of how you found out about the opening. This is important because many employers advertise their positions using a variety of media, and they keep track of how applicants find out about their openings. The opening paragraph should be relatively short and to-the-point.

2. **“Value-selling” paragraph:** Your company research is vital here. With the company’s needs in mind, cite achievements and contributions from prior experiences which complement, not repeat, information on your resume. Sell yourself, and don’t be afraid to show enthusiasm for the field you want to work in.

3. **Action statement:** Politely urge the employer to consider your application. Indicate that you will contact them within a certain time period.

4. **Statement of appreciation:** Here you express your appreciation for the time the employer is taking to consider your application.

THE THANK-YOU LETTER

- Is an essential follow-up item to an interview which does the following:
  a) Thanks the interviewer(s).
  b) Further markets your skills.
  c) Reaffirms your interest in the position.

FORMAT – A neat thank-you letter with proper layout and spacing creates a professional, positive impression that can give new life to your candidacy.

The letter should clearly show that you paid attention, understood the importance of the interviewer’s comments, are excited about the job and that you can make valuable contributions to the company. If you decide on an email thank you, you must avoid “email speak” while clearly and concisely communicating the following important elements:

1. **Statement of appreciation for the interview.** Include a detail about yourself from the interview so they remember who you are. (They may have interviewed many people that day!)

2. **Expression of interest in the job.**

3. **Reaffirmation of your qualifications for the position.**

4. **Action-compelling statement and final “thank you.”**

**Things to keep in mind:**

1. **Type the letter.** However, you might consider e-mailing your thanks if the interview was for a part-time position, or was more casual in nature. No thank you cards, please.

2. **Address the letter to the main interviewer.** If possible and when appropriate, mention the names of other interviewers, although separate letters for each interviewer are suggested.

3. **Mail it within 24 hours.**


COVER LETTER SAMPLE

Jeffrey Ethier  
2251 Marino Terrace  
Alhambra, CA  91102  
ethier22@sbcglobal.net  

April 24, 2008  

Martha Pena  
Director of Social Services  
Muscat Correctional Institute  
444 Carmine Street  
Muscat, California  90000  

Dear Ms Pena:  

I heard about the Correctional Officer opening at Muscat through your recent appearance at the Cal State L.A. Spring Career Fair. I had an informative conversation with your representative Don Pardo, who suggested that I apply.  

I will graduate this June from Cal State L.A. with a degree in Social Work. I am currently completing an internship at the Families in Transition Crisis Center in El Monte, at which I have counseled many families affected by crime and incarceration. Having myself grown up in a rough neighborhood, I know the importance of a fair but authoritative criminal justice system. My varied work experience, volunteer activities and internships have given me wide exposure to social issues, and my current supervisor has frequently commented on my natural aptitude for a career in social work.  

I would welcome the chance to contribute to the goals and vision of the Institute and would like the opportunity to meet with you in person to share more about myself. I will contact you in two weeks to see if you received my application materials.  

Many thanks for your consideration.  

Sincerely,  

Jeffrey Ethier

THANK YOU/FOLLOW UP SAMPLE

Susanna Koufax  
212 Sierra Vista Avenue  
Sierra Madre, California  91745  

July 24, 2008  

Fred Rogers  
Accounting Coordinator  
California State Lands Commission  
777 Thistle St.  
Sacramento, CA 94444  

Dear Mr. Rogers:  

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the interview yesterday and to confirm my strong interest in the Accountant I position with the commission.  

As we discussed, I feel that my education and background have provided me with an understanding of business operations which will prove to be an asset to your company. Additionally, I have always been considered a hard worker and a dependable, loyal employee. I am confident that I can make a valuable contribution to your Group Pension Fund area if given the opportunity.  

I look forward to meeting with you again in the near future to further discuss your needs. Thank you again for so graciously sharing your time and offering career advice.  

Sincerely,  

Susanna Koufax