**Intermediate Writing**

**Revising Application Letter**

**Session 5**

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**What is an Application Letter?**

**Application letter** is a business letter sent by the job applicant to the prospective employer with the hope of eventually landing the job. Application letter is the first contact that an employee has attempted to that of the company. A such, it is extremely important for the job applicant to exercise extra care and politeness in his dealings. Therefore, a well-written application letter is your passport to your dream job you always wanted after your graduation.

Application letters are actually sales letters. You are trying to “sell” yourself so you are “packaging” or “showcasing” your educational qualifications, experiences, talents, skills and knowledge. As a salesperson, you are hoping that the manager will “buy” what you are offering and you will eventually be “hired” based not on whom you know but rather, on what you know and what you have.

Now, when you write your application letter, use this letter to highlight your enthusiasm and your suitability for the position you are applying for. Don’t forget to highlight your strengths and your skills.

**Characteristics of an Application Letter**

* Application letter has to be the most formal business letter that you ever write. You are to project a favorable impression to your future employer. Hence, you need to be extra careful with your choice of words.
* Application letter provides detailed information on why are you qualified for the job you are applying for. These include your educational qualifications, trainings, seminars, and workshops which strengthen your over-all knowledge and skills necessary for you to perform in your job.
* It explains the reasons for your interest in the specific organization as well as identifies your most relevant skills or experiences.
* The application letter is a tool used to sell yourself as a job candidate. It supplements your resume and expands upon relevant parts of your work history and qualifications.
* Your application letter should let the employer know what position you are applying for, why the employer should select you for an interview, and how you will be contacted for a possible follow-up.

**Types of Application Letter**

Application letters fall into two categories. There are:

1. **Solicited Application Letter**. This is the type of application letter that you write when the company actually announced a job opening in various media such as Classified Ads, Billboards, Radio, TV, among others.
2. **Unsolicited Application Letter**. This is the type of application letter when the company did not actually posted any job hiring event but you are writing somehow because of  the common knowledge about the potential need to hire additional employees.

**Writing Application Letters**

When writing application letters, remember to include in the:

* **Opening Paragraph**: *Why are you writing* – mention the job you are applying for and where you found the listing/opening. For unsolicited, mention that a reliable source has feed you with information hence you are expressing your desire to apply. Don’t forget to state what made you decide to choose the company and apply for the job.
* **Middle Paragraph(s)**: *What you have to offer the employer* – systematically mention why your experiences, educational qualifications, knowledge and skills are a good fit for the job. Mention that the company and yourself will both benefit from the “partnership” if ever you will be hired by them.
* **Closing Paragraph**: *Be appreciative.* Say thank you to the hiring manager for considering you and note how you will follow up. You may leave your contact details, email, website, LinkedIn account, among others, should they wish to contact you

**Application letter Do’s and Don’t’s**

Here are some helpful tips when writing application letters:

* **Do’s:** Include the addressee‘s full name, title, company name, and company address
* Include your own full name, address, and contact information
* Use a formal greeting (Mr., Ms., Dr.) use formal language throughout the letter
* Mention how you found out about the position
* Be clear, objective and persuasive — rather than simply describing your background
* Be positive in tone, content and expectations
* Use transitions appropriately
* Follow up after five business days

Here are some things to avoid when writing application letters:

* **Don’t’s:**Write a long letter—shorter is better (2 pages max)
* Address the person by first name unless you know him or her personally and have permission to do so
* Write more than three/four paragraphs (just limit it with intro, core, closing)
* Forget to personally sign the letter
* Use contractions (I‘m, I‘d, you‘ll)
* Mix up UK and US English varieties
* Use flashy stationery (unless you‘re applying for a highly creative job)
* Use slang, vulgar, street, and profane words

# 7 Features Of Effective E-Cover Letters

[Kristin Johnson](https://www.workitdaily.com/u/kristin-johnson)

September 07, 2015

### 1. Targeted subject line.

Include the job title and a branding statement here.

Subject: Business and Financial IT Director: Initiative-driven Growth and Process Improvement

### 2. Opening statement.

In the first one or two sentences, concisely spell out the obvious reason why you are writing. (Don’t make a hiring manager guess which position you’re applying for if it is a listed position, or which one you’re interested in if it is an exploratory letter.) Start the letter off strong by giving a solid example or metric that illustrates how your past accomplishments will be an asset to the employer in the future. Remember, you only have a few seconds to capture the hiring manager’s attention!

“Under my leadership, our operations department processed a 250% increase in claims volume last quarter – without an hour of overtime – through process improvements, greater team collaboration, and technology implementation. It’s with this track record of creating streamlined operations and amplified profitability that I would like to be considered for your V.P. of Operations position.”

A word about name-dropping. It’s OK to respectfully mention the person who is referring you to apply. People hire people they know and like. Having an internal contact that can vouch for your professionalism increases your chance of an interview.

### 3. Bulleted body.

Here you can substantiate your brand statement and garner interest by mentioning specific areas and accomplishments that correspond to the company’s needs.

Proof of my impact on operational efficiency and corporate bottom line:

* PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS – Slashed time to release new policies in half during first 6 months as V.P. of Operations.
* TEAM ENGAGEMENT – Boosted attendance of operations center staff by 75% within first 6 months with recognition and collaborative programs.
* TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION – Improved production 40% in billing department through modernization of technology and transitioning to paperless environment.

### 4. Conclusion.

Don’t be shy here! This is the place to inform the reader, politely, that your cover letter and resume are not going to be the final communications from you.

“I welcome confidential discussions of how I may add additional value to MetLife. I will contact your executive assistant early next week to schedule a meeting. In the meantime, please see my enclosed résumé.”

### 5. Closing.

Signing off with “Sincerely,” “Best Regards,” or “Thank you for your consideration” is a courteous way to end your e-note.

### 6. Name.

If you have a common name, consider adding your middle initial or credentials at the end of your name to prevent identity confusion when an employer searches online for you.

### 7. Signature block.

Include additional contact information to make it easy for someone to contact you: phone number, e-mail, LinkedIn URL, and other social media information. Also list any branding information, tagline, or website, along with any awards or notable accomplishments. Separate your signature from the e-note with a dashed line or symbols, like in this example: ========================== Jamie Johnson, MBA Cell: 920-555-1212 E-mail: jjmba@gmail.com LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/jjmba Twitter: @jjmba And just like that, you’re done! You’ve written a short and sweet summary of your interest in and qualifications for the job. And most importantly… you’ve likely managed to keep the hiring manager’s finger off their Facebook tab or delete key. Need more help? See [cover letter](http://www.professiondirection.net/for-job-seekers/resume-samples/sample-cover-letters/) and resume samples on my website to get ideas, or decide if you’d like a consultation.

### ****Application Letter Format****(full block style)

**Your Name**

**Your Address** or **Letterhead**

(can be positioned only to the left)

**Recipient’s Name** (specific official or person)

**Recipient’s Address**(can be positioned only to the left)

**Date**

(can be positioned only to the left, before, after Reference or at the start)

**Reference** or **Subjec**t (optional)

**Dear Recipient**(Salutation)

**First Paragraph –**Introduce yourself, write 2-4 lines pertaining to assistance, admission, employment, favour, information etc.

**Second Paragraph** – Details of the topic at hand

**Third Paragraph –**Intimation for any further communication and so on.

**Subscription**– Thanking you, yours sincerely etc.

**Signature**  
**Your First Name** **Last Name**

**ENCL** (optional) stands for ‘Enclosure’ which can be any related attached documents.

# Application Letter Vs. Cover Letter

by Ruth Mayhew; Updated June 29, 2018

There are subtle differences between application letters and cover letters. However, the terms cover and application are sometimes used interchangeably. An application letter is often intended to stand on its own, whereas a cover letter generally can't be the applicant's only document submitted to express interest in a job opening.

**Cover Letter versus Application Letter Introductions**

Cover letters typically contain a brief introduction. The introduction in a cover letter consists of three to four sentences about the job seeker's work experiences, education, accomplishments and the type of organizations he feels are best suited for his qualifications. On the other hand, an application letter might contain a more extensive introduction simply because this letter serves a purpose that's similar to the resume.

**Example:**

*Dear (Hiring Executive),*

*Please accept my enclosed application for the position of executive assistant to your Vice President of Operations. I'm pleased to say that my qualifications match your job requirements perfectly. In my current role with Genex Engineering, I handle all of the same duties and much more as executive assistant to the president and CEO for the past four years. My experience, education (bachelor's degree), strong communication skills and ability to manage complex tasks and solve problems makes me an ideal candidate for your position.*

**Cover Letter Versus Application Letter Work History**

An application letter generally contains a brief description of the job seeker's work history or professional experience. An application letter often can substitute for a resume and, therefore, requires that the job seeker include specific information about her work history and professional competencies. A cover letter shouldn't contain too much information about the job seeker's work history because it's merely an introduction to the resume. It's acceptable for a cover letter to reference the job seeker's work history in a sentence or two about her current or previous employer; however, it shouldn't contain details about any professional experience.

**Example of Cover Letter Work History:**

*Prior to working at Genex Engineering, I was executive secretary to the COO at Boomer Industrial Hose Inc. and started my career as a receptionist/ secretary for the Sales Manager at Geny Oil Corp. 10 years ago in Texas.*

No need to add more to your work history in a cover letter as it is thoroughly covered in the accompanying resume.

**Example of Application Letter Work History:**

*At Genex Engineering, I handle all of the duties required of your position and much more as executive assistant to the president and CEO for the past four years. In addition to providing secretarial and administrative support to the president, I train other secretaries to support other high-level executives and regularly speak at conventions and manage trade shows. My responsibilities also include creating presentations and proposals, arranging travel for all the executives, generating reports and taking responsibility for confidential company documents. I spearheaded modifications in IT that generated increased profitability for Genex and implemented a variety of upgrades in our accounting procedures dramatically cutting costs in that department.*

After describing your duties in your present position, you would then briefly describe your duties in your two previous junior-intermediate level jobs at Boomer and Geny Oil.

**Cover Letter Versus Application Letter Content**

A cover letter is a teaser. Its intent is to capture the reader's attention enough to make the recruiter or hiring manager want to review the resume. The cover letter should contain just enough information that it doesn't give away everything about the applicant. An application letter, on the other hand, is a more comprehensive document. It describes the applicant's educational background, certifications and licenses, and in some cases, salary history for job postings that require it.

**When to Use an Application Letter**

When an employer specifically requires a cover letter and resume, that's what the job seeker should submit. It's relatively rare that an employer will accept an application letter in lieu of a cover letter and resume. The two approaches are different and employers use application letters infrequently when compared to how they use cover letters and resumes. An application letter is more appropriate for unsolicited interest, or when there isn't a job posting. For example, an application letter could be mailed to several employers that aren't advertising specific jobs vacancies as a way to provide a more extensive introduction to prospective employers.

**Uses of Cover Letters and Application Letters**

A cover letter is almost always used to express interest in employment. An application letter can be used for employment purposes; however, it can also be used for applying for a place in an academic program or an internship program. Employers don't always require a cover letter, but it's always a good idea to use a cover letter. On the other hand, an application letter might be the only requirement sought by schools or employers – with an application letter, it may not always be necessary to include a resume.

**References**

<https://www.workitdaily.com/effective-e-cover-letters>

<https://work.chron.com/application-letter-vs-cover-letter-5451.html>