



Cover Letter Tutorial

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A cover letter is the best way to sell yourself to a prospective employer. It will allow you to include points that aren't covered by your resume and argue your case as to why you'd be a great fit for the job. It is also the first form of contact you will have with the hiring team and can even be handy for inquiring into future positions with a company that you are interested in. This is probably why they can be so agonizing to write and why there are so many tutorials online. As with resumes, keeping a cover letter relatively short is best. You want to be able to convey things concisely without taking up too much of the hiring team's time. So let's delve into the different parts that should be included in a cover letter.

The Address

You obviously want to start by addressing your letter to the hiring team or manager. Sometimes this in and of itself can be tricky and daunting. Traditionally, if you were unaware of who to address it to, it was acceptable to write "Dear Sir or Madam" or "To Whom It May Concern", but let's look at some better options:

- If you can find out who is in charge of hiring for the position you are applying for then DO address it to them!
 - You may find it in the job posting itself
 - You can research the company online or call the HR Department
 - You may be able to find employees that are NSH members thru the NSH member directory and could contact them to inquire
- If you can find a name but are unable to decipher the person's gender
 - It is OK to address the person by their full name leaving off any prefix titles such as Mr., Mrs., Ms., etc.
- If you are unable to find a specific person's name, try addressing the letter to a group
 - 'Selection Committee', 'Hiring Professionals', or simply 'Hiring Manager'

The Introduction

You want to start out by telling the hiring team who you are and why you are interested in the job posting or their company. You also want to mention if you were referred by anyone in particular. If you have had contact with the hiring team previously you can mention it in the introduction as well. Conclude this section by making a few strong claims as to your interest. Some things to consider including in the introduction:



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- Why the company in question interests you. Location? Referral?
- Any connections you may have made within the company
- Opportunities to learn new techniques or an opportunity to share new techniques/ideas
- Opportunities for advancement in your career

The Body

After you have introduced yourself you want to answer a few key questions that are not typically covered by your resume.

- How can you show you are qualified for the position? What are your strengths? What can you contribute?
 - Embedding/Cutting speeds
 - Proficiency in Special Staining or IHC
 - What are your certifications: HT, HTL, QIHC? Do you plan on gaining more certifications or qualifications but have yet to do so?
 - Leadership experience
- What have you done to illustrate those qualifications that you have mentioned?
 - Promotions?
 - Special projects or duties in your current/past jobs?
- If the job would require relocation you may want to address why you would be willing to do so in the body of your cover letter

The Closing

The closing to your letter is where you get to make one final push for your candidacy. You will want to remind the hiring team why you are a good candidate. Definitely request an interview/meeting to discuss your candidacy further and do follow up after a week or two if you don't hear back. Lastly, thank the hiring team for their time and consideration!

The Signature

If you are sending a hardcopy of your letter and resume to a prospective employee make sure to physically sign the letter including your typed name below it. Also, don't forget to include your contact information! They can't get a hold of you if they don't have your contact information.

If you are sending your cover letter and resume via email make sure that your electronic signature is professional with your contact information. Typically your cover letter is typed into the body of



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the email and your resume/CV is included as an attachment but both could be attached as documents. Also, do make sure your email address is a professional one as well!