

11 Common Cover Letter Mistakes lby EmploymentDigest.net

1. Not addressing the letter to a specific person. You can use the Internet or personal contacts to track down the hiring manager. Often a quick phone call to the company solves the problem. Sending in your resume and cover letter addressed to “dear Sir” instead of a named individual shows that you haven’t taken the time to properly research this position, and are not that interested in the position.
2. Not capturing the reader’s attention right away. Do not start off weak. Don’t just start with “I am applying for a position x posted a paper x”. Instead you could say: My five years of experience at x makes me an excellent match for position x listed in paper x”. Don’t use phrases such as “I think”. Use stronger language such as “I know”. Remember to point out any contacts you might have in the company in the first paragraph.
3. Sending your resume without a cover letter or sending a generic nonspecific cover letter. Sometimes it might feel tempting to just take the shot and send the resume without writing a letter: Don’t do this since you don’t know how much weight the employer puts on the letter. Also do not reuse the same letter for different jobs. Of course you may use the bulk of the letter but tailor the specifics to the job ad. A good tactic is to make sure that all of the key words in the ad are somehow covered in the letter.
4. Your cover letter should not be a rewrite of your resume. Use points from the resume that are relevant to the job in the letter. Do not waste the employer’s time with the rest.
5. Do not focus on your personal life. Do not include data such as gender, martial status, religion or any other personal information unless it directly relevant to the job. Do not include any photos unless the ad is for a job in modeling acting or broadcasting.
6. Don’t try to be funny. Don’t use anecdotes or humor. Even if you have a great sense of humor you do not know if the employer will have one. Also, you might not be taken seriously. Use a conversational but professional tone.
7. Don’t make the letter too long. Your letter should never be longer than one page so do not use your cover letter to provide a narrative of your life and career.
8. Do not use a gimmicky cover letter format. It’s usually a good idea to use a simple, well written letter printed on white or ivory paper. Sometimes a cover letter in a different color might catch the employer’s attention, but this could backfire. Only use this if you know what you’re doing.
9. Proofreading. Your cover letter may not have any typos and grammatical errors. Make sure it is easy to read and has a good flow. The employer should know the most important points after quick scan of the letter.
10. Don’t forget to include your contact information on the cover letter. Sometimes cover letters and resumes get separated. Make sure you can be reached from either of them.
11. Show your desire to be interviewed. Ask for an interview in the cover letter. You can take this a step further by telling the employer that you will contact them to arrange an interview appointment. Obviously you have to follow up in a specified time frame.