

## Creating Successful Cover Letters

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Always include a cover letter and resume with each job application. Many job seekers put a great deal of effort into creating a “perfect” resume and neglect to create a cover letter that is just as polished. A cover letter is another opportunity to convince an employer that you are the best candidate for a particular job.

### Successful cover letters are:

- Targeted toward an individual employer . . . always research the employer first!
- Slanted toward what you can offer an employer, not what you think the employer should offer you
- When possible, addressed to an individual
- Spelled, punctuated, and paragraphed correctly
- Written in your own words and in conversational language
- Brief, concise and to the point, including career objective
- Closed with a direct request for some sort of action. Normally this would be a request for an interview

### Structure your cover letter with three or four paragraphs:

**First Paragraph:** State the reason for your letter, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and how you learned of the opening (Career Services, online job board, referral, etc.). This paragraph can be short and succinct.

**Second Paragraph:** Indicate why you are interested in the position and the company and what you can do for the employer. Outline your strongest qualifications. If you are a current student or recent graduate, explain how your course work makes you a qualified candidate. If you have related work experience, point out your achievements in that area. Do not repeat your resume—add to the information it contains, and provide specific examples. *You may want to use more than one paragraph to state this information.*

**Third Paragraph:** Indicate your desire for an interview and thank them for the consideration.

## Sample Cover Letter

David P. Ross  
899 Northeast Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63128  
(314) 843-4XXX  
David.ross@none.com

April 29, 2021

Ms. Mary Jones, College Recruiting Coordinator  
ChemSpec Inc.  
11459 Jones Parkway  
St. Louis, MO 63033

Dear Ms. Jones:

Please consider my application for the position of Sales Representative at ChemSpec Inc. I saw this position on Triton Careers through the University of Missouri-St. Louis Career Services office.

As a candidate for the job, I offer you excellent organizational skills. I demonstrated my ability to organize when I served as chair of my fraternity's rush program. During that year, I increased the number of pledges by 20% over the previous year.

Additionally, while selling ads for the *UMSL Current* student newspaper I developed knowledge of our advertising market. My strategy in selling ads consisted of contacting past advertisers and targeting merchants patronized by UMSL students. I added six new advertising customers during my first term on the job.

I would like to talk with you about my qualifications for the job and my interest in ChemSpec Inc. Thank you for considering my qualifications.

Sincerely,

David P. Ross

**UMSL** | Career Services  
University of Missouri–St. Louis

314-516-5111  
careers.umsl.edu  
careerservices@umsl.edu