

## How to Write a Cover Letter

Cover letters are used to introduce yourself and to briefly explain your qualifications to a prospective employer. A cover letter should always accompany your resume or CV when applying for a position. The cover letter should highlight information included on your resume or CV without duplicating information verbatim. Use the same letterhead (on top) and font used for your resume and other application documents.

### Sample Template

**Your Name**

City, State, Zip Code ▪ Phone No. ▪ Email Address

Today's Date

Individual's Name  
Title  
Institution / Organization  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr.: (Or if name unknown: Dear Hiring Manager or Dear Search Committee:)

**1st Paragraph:** In your initial paragraph, indicate the reason for writing, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and how you learned of the opening. (e.g., prior contact with hiring manager or employees of the organization, journal/newspaper ad, online posting).

**2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph:** Mention qualifications you think would be of greatest interest to the search committee/employer. Explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. Mention ideas for future research, if applicable. If you have related experience, point this out by mentioning specific achievements or unique qualifications gained through this experience. Above all, indicate how you can contribute to the organization.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph:** Explain why you are particularly interested in the position and the organization. Subtly emphasize your knowledge of the institution / organization. Connect this information to your own background, qualifications, career objectives, etc.

**4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph:** In the closing paragraph, indicate your desire for an interview. Refer the reader to the enclosed CV or resume and offer to provide additional information, if necessary. Finally, thank the employer for his/her consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature (if appropriate)

Your name typed

**Individual career coaching, job search and interview assistance is available to all UNC postdocs through the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs**

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1114 Bioinformatics Bldg • UNC-Chapel Hill and 301B Bynum Hall • UNC-Chapel Hill  
Website: [postdocs.unc.edu](http://postdocs.unc.edu) • Tel: (919) 962-9982