



COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
OF RHODE ISLAND

# Job Application Letters

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# Process of Getting a Job



An application letter is one part of the process of applying for a job:

1. Conduct research about job openings and companies.
2. Submit a résumé, application letter, and other documents.
3. Be interviewed at least once by one or more people.
4. Send a thank-you letter to the interviewer(s).

# The Purpose of An Application Letter

An application letter:

- Should connect information on an attached résumé to a specific job at a specific company.
- Should include what an employer requests and needs to know. For example, if an employer wants to know an applicant's desired salary, then a salary range (rather than a specific salary) can be included.



# Required Parts of An Application Letter

Application letters should include:

1. Correct letter format
2. Appropriate content
3. Logical organization
4. Effective writing style



# Correct Letter Format

Full block is one kind of letter format:

- It is the easiest format to type.
- One-inch margins are used.
- The main sections are all aligned next to the left margin.
- Extra space separates each section.
- Especially if bulleted or enumerated items are included, then full block will be the clearest format.

August 15, 2015  
101 Main Street  
City, Rhode Island 02999

Joe Smith  
102 Main Street  
City, Rhode Island 02999

Dear Joe Smith:

This first paragraph should begin with an attention-getting sentence. Information is also needed about what specific job the applicant is applying for.

At least one body paragraph should show how elements of the enclosed resume connect to the specific job.

Different kinds of information are needed:

1. skills
2. education
3. work experience

Many application letters use a separate paragraph for skills, education, and work experience.

The concluding paragraph should include contact information, such as one or more phone number(s) and e-mail [address\(es\)](#).

Sincerely,

*Alex Jones*

# Appropriate Letter Content

Application letters need these parts:

Date

Return address

Inside address

Salutation with a colon

At least 3 paragraphs

Closing with a comma

Signature

Typed applicant's name

Enclosure notation

August 15, 2015  
101 Main Street  
City, Rhode Island 02999

Joe Smith  
102 Main Street  
City, Rhode Island 02999

Dear Joe Smith:

This first paragraph should begin with an attention-getting sentence. Information is also needed about what specific job the applicant is applying for.

At least one body paragraph should show how elements of the enclosed resume connect to the specific job.

Information is needed about the applicant's skills, background, education, work experience, and other appropriate details. Many application letters use a separate paragraph for skills, education, and work experience.

The concluding paragraph should include contact information, such as one or more phone number(s) and e-mail [address\(es\)](#).

Sincerely,

*Alex Jones*

Alex Jones  
Enclosure: resume

# Logical Organization

- An introduction should get the reader's attention and mention the applicant's need for a specific job.
- The body paragraphs should create an interest in interviewing the job applicant. These paragraphs need to include information connecting details in the résumé to a specific job. The applicant's skills, background, education, and work experience should be summarized.
- The conclusion must include contact information (one or more phone numbers and e-mail addresses), as well as request an interview for a job.

# Effective Writing Style

- Positive content and tone are needed.
- The writing style should show a job applicant's communication skills.
- Inclusion of vocabulary from the field will display the applicant's knowledge.
- Both the first and the second person point of view are generally included in different sections of the letter.



# The First Person Point of View: “I,” “me,” and “my”

- To show the writer’s view, a **few** sentences (**not all** sentences) should begin with “I.”
- Some sentences can **begin with a phrase(s)** or use **“my” + a noun**.
  - Original: I have six years of teaching experience. I also have computer skills.
  - Revision: **In addition to six years of teaching experience**, I have computer skills.
  - Revision: **My six years** of teaching experience is enhanced by my computer skills.

# The Second Person Point of View: “you” and “your”

- The **second person point of view** can help to create a positive connection to the audience:
  - **Your** company’s policies are really helpful to its customers.
- The imperative mood, in which the word “**you**” is understood, can also be used:
  - Please contact me at 333-333-3333.

# Application Letters Should Not Include:

- Grammatical errors
- False information
- Unnecessary information
- Negative content

# Application Letters Should Not Include Grammatical Errors.

- Computer and online grammar checkers will only spot some potential problem areas.
- Application letters should be proofread multiple times by different people.
- Even a single error will show that an applicant is sloppy and/or uneducated.

# Application Letters Should Not Include False Information.

- Application letters should be proofread carefully to make certain all of the information is correct.
- An incorrect phone number or e-mail address will mean a potential employer might not be able to contact the job applicant.
- If a person lies while applying for a job, the truth is usually discovered. The person then will not be hired or will be considered untrustworthy and fired.

# Application Letters Should Not Include Unnecessary Information.

- An application letter, in addition to the résumé, should convey only enough information to show that an applicant is highly qualified for a specific job. During a job interview, additional information will be communicated.
- Since an application letter connects the content of a resume to a specific job, the letter should not be any longer than a page.

# Application Letters Should Not Include Negative Content.

- If a job applicant says something negative, then people will probably think of the applicant in a negative way.
- For example, if an application letter says: “My current employer will not let me advance,” potential employers might think the job applicant likes to complain and/or lacks the ability to advance into a higher position.

# Helpful Online Links

- [“Job Search Writing” at Purdue’s Online Writing Lab](#)
- [Résumés and cover letters at Penn State University](#)
- [Microsoft Office free online templates](#)



# More Information

The Writing Center at the Community College of Rhode Island has more online resources.



# Contact Information

This presentation is the creation of

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