Cover Letter Template and Guidelines

Today’s Date

Your Address
City, State and Zip
E-mail address

Mr./Ms. (Contact’s Name), Title
Company Name
Company Address and Street
City, State and Zip

Dear Mr./Ms.________________:

OPENING PARAGRAPH:
You may use a clever opening sentence to make the reader want to continue reading.
This shows you’ve done your homework regarding the company’s needs.
• Often a strong declarative sentence about the job function or business area is an attention-getter.
  Example: “Solid supply chain management reduces costs and leads to customer satisfaction.”
• State the reason for the letter, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying.
• Indicate how you learned of the opening (e.g., PSU Career Center, newspaper ad, on-campus
  information session, etc.) or who referred you to the company.

BODY: Critical content section.
There are two key ideas you want to get across here:
(1) Why you are interested in the company.  (2) Why the company should be interested in you.

• State the skills/strengths you will bring to the job and that parallel those needed to fill the position.
• Give examples of your skills and work experience—quantified results, accomplishments,
  achievements—and how they will transfer to the job.
• If you are still in school or a recent grad, explain how your academic background makes you a
  qualified candidate for the position.
• Avoid repeating information already in your resume. Instead, expand on it and give examples.
• You may wish to break this section into several short paragraphs that separate and emphasize your
  skills and strengths. Some people choose to use bullets for easy reading of lists of accomplishments.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH: Push for personal contact. Ask for an interview.
• Refer to documents enclosed or available, such as your resume, reference letters, a portfolio or work
  samples.
• Let the interviewer know that you are available for a personal interview at his/her convenience.
• Make it easy for the person to contact you; list your phone number, e-mail, and days and times
  when you can be reached (especially important if you are still a student and are in classes during the
  day). If you aren’t home during day, invest in an answering machine.

Sincerely,

(Sign clearly above your typed name)

Your Name, Typed

Enclosures:  Resume
             Writing Samples  (… or Application, or Portfolio, or whatever is applicable. Most often the
             only enclosure or attachment will be the resume itself.)