

SAMPLE COVER LETTER OUTLINE

Appropriate (i.e., conservative) Letterhead or Resume Header
Street Address, City, State and Zip Code; Telephone; E-mail

Date

Full Name of Targeted Individual [if an attorney, include “ , Esq.”]
Complete Title (if applicable)
Entire Name of Firm or Organization
Address

Re: (subject) - This line will only be necessary if you are going to state the vacancy number or other required reference in the text of the letter.

Dear Mr. / Ms. / Judge:

Opening Paragraph/Positioning Statement. Be concise in explaining:

(1) Who you are (*e.g.*, “I am a law student at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law...”);
(2) your objective (*e.g.*, “and am writing to apply for a summer associate position with [firm name].”);
(3) briefly, your qualifications for the position (“I have a demonstrated interest in corporate law...”); and,
if applicable, (4) the name of a contact (“Mr. Alexander suggested that I contact you directly...”).

Heart of the Letter. This section should be no longer than two paragraphs and should convey relevant:
(1) experience (academic and practical); (2) credentials (overall grades and/or upward trend); (3) accomplishments (academic [undergraduate and/or law school], job-related, or otherwise); (4) honors and awards (academic, military, civic, etc.); (5) critical reasoning, research and writing skills (acquired before and during law school). If you are responding to a job posting, you should include key words or skills described in the posting for a more targeted cover letter. *Because most employers consider cover letters to be indicative of the author’s research and writing abilities, as well as telling of his/her level of commitment to the subject organization, they expect perfection and a personalized approach.*

Closing Paragraph. (1) Briefly reiterate your qualifications for the position; (2) indicate the materials you have included for their review; and thank the reader (“Thank you for your time and consideration in reviewing my application materials.”).

“Sincerely,” “Sincerely yours,” or “Very truly yours,”

Signature in black or blue ink
Typed Name

Enclosure(s): (#) (*Remember: if you are faxing/e-mailing your cover letter and resume to an employer, those materials are attachments, not enclosures, and you would use Attachment(s) instead of Enclosure(s).*)