

The Cover Letter

Making a First Impression

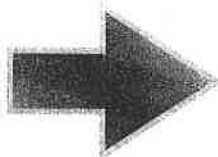
If you're sending a résumé to a prospective employer, you need to send a **cover letter** too. A cover letter explains more about you and why you fit the job. It is the first thing the employer looks at, so you want it to make a good impression. Therefore, it should be:

- **Short:** It should have three or four brief paragraphs, and fit on one page.
- **Personal:** Use the exact name/title of the person responsible for hiring, if you can. You can often phone and get this information. Make sure to ask for the right spelling—it's a turnoff to be called Dyanne when your name is Diane. If you don't know the name, you can address it to Human Resources.
- **Focused:** Match relevant details from your experiences to the responsibilities and qualifications of the job as stated in the ad you're responding to.
- **Researched:** Refer to the organization's goals and needs. Tailor your letter specifically to the position/company.
- **Interesting:** Demonstrate your enthusiasm.
- **A request for action:** Make clear your interest in the position, and request an interview.
- **Perfect:** Read and re-read for punctuation, grammar and spelling errors.
- **Appealing to the eye:** Use the same quality paper as for your résumé.



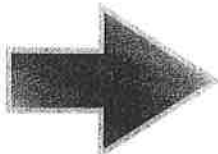
Dana's Cover Letter to the Video Store Manager

Make sure you put in **your complete address** and all the ways you can be contacted



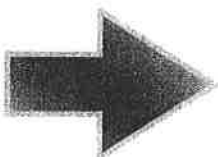
Dana Pareau
2256 Main Street
Anywhere, Ontario M9Q 2P2
555-3331
dana@internetaddress

Date



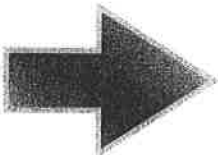
June 3, 2001

Address the letter to the right person and make sure the **name, title and address** are accurate



Ms Jeannette Lincoln, Manager
Winners Videos
Anywhere, Ontario M9Q 3Z8

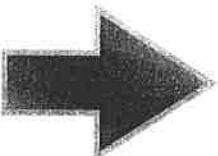
Salutation



Dear Ms Lincoln:

First paragraph

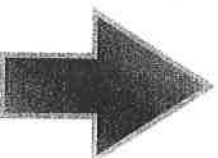
- state why you are writing
- state the position applied for
- make a general comment about the company



I am responding to the ad in the *Tribune* for a full-time video sales clerk at the Stanwell Shopping Centre. I have often rented movies from Winners Videos at the Heron Mall and always been impressed by the quality of service I found there.

Second paragraph

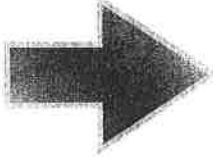
- state your academic qualifications, if needed
- match your skills with those required for the job
- highlight experience relevant to the job



As a long-time newspaper deliverer, I know how important it is to be reliable and on time, and to handle cash carefully. In addition, I am an avid movie-goer and knowledgeable about many different types of movies. I believe that I have excellent qualifications for your position.

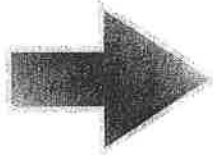
Third paragraph

- request action
- say you will follow up (and try to do so)



I have attached my résumé for your consideration. If I haven't heard from you by June 15, I will call to follow up. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Closing



Yours sincerely,
Dana Pareau

- If you write a very good cover letter, the employer will be more likely to read your résumé.
- If your résumé is very good, you are more likely to get an interview.
- If your interview is very good, you are more likely to get a job offer.

Nothing is guaranteed, because there are many people looking for work, but you have a better chance if you develop job-search skills and create excellent tools.

