

COVER LETTER PERSPECTIVES & THE PURPOSE OF YOUR COVER LETTER

Connect Who You Are and Why You Do What You Do with an Employers Needs and Culture

The cover letter's status is complicated to say the least. Part of the reason for the confusion is that, unlike the resume, the cover letter has not evolved with the digital times. The cover letter no longer is about driving attention to something else – for example, your resume.

That doesn't mean it isn't important, it just means that the cover letter's purpose has changed. Today, the cover letter is about connecting on an emotional, and cerebral level with the reader. It has become more about creating engagement. The goal isn't solely to get the person hiring to read your resume. In today's digital age of uploading documents or attaching files to an email, if your cover letter does not quickly engage the reader, your resume may not even be read!

The goal of the cover letter, and the resume, is to get the reader to contact you and inquire further as to whether you might be the solution to the club's problem. In fact, experts suggest that it is best not to think of the cover letter as a letter at all. Instead, think of it as direct email marketing. The problem with that, however, is that most people don't know how to sell themselves. This means writing about yourself in a way that is not overly haughty or arrogant, but in a way that conveys a quiet, self-assured confidence.

One of the biggest trends in cover letter composition is storytelling, or creating a narrative that connects you to the club, and the needs of the position. Does the club's purpose match your values and beliefs, for instance? If so, look to connect to a specific experience that serves as a clear example of how well you fit into such an environment. If the culture of the club to whom you are applying is similar to that of a previous job in which you were successful, provide a story of how well that worked for you – and for the club where you worked. Be prepared to describe your skills and key accomplishments. Outline not only how your past accomplishments relate to the job you are applying for, but why these accomplishments matter to you.

Another tip for writing cover letters is to borrow from the social networks and set a character limit. There's nothing worse than a lengthy email introduction, after all. To keep your letter brief, and not simply restate your resume, try to build upon the Professional Summary (from your Resume), highlighting how your previous accomplishments were the result of your key skills, and your passion, aligning to serve the needs of your club.

Your cover letter should not be too long, it should complement – not duplicate your resume, and it should include enough information for the reader to have confidence in your abilities, and curiosity about how you would approach the role. Always maintain the mindset that the things that you do as a professional – the fundamentals (teaching, running programs, maintaining the facility) are a baseline. These skills have been referred to as *the price of entry* (the right to realistically compete for a job). These "skills" will not get you hired. People hire other people. People hire who you are, not what you do. Your Cover Letter is the first opportunity for you to convey to the reader *Who You Are and Why You Do What You Do*.