



Cover Letter Tips

When Applying for King County Jobs

USE BUSINESS FORMAT

Your Name

Your Address

cell phone • personal email

Date

Name of contact person listed on the job posting

Name of organization

Address

City, State, Zip

RE: Name of job and posting number

Dear Mr./Ms. Contact Person:

Explain briefly how you heard about the position and what specifically about the job excites you.

Use one or more paragraphs to quickly describe how you meet as many of the qualifications as you can along with any competencies listed in the job description. Use the same keywords, phrases and terminology from the job description. You could insert a table with the left side of the table summarizing the required qualification. On the right side of the table bullet out how you meet that qualification. The key is to make it easy for the reader to see how you match up to the qualifications they are seeking. Qualifications are usually listed in order of priority so make sure you address the qualifications in the order listed.

Ensure the letter is free of capitalization, spelling or grammar errors and that the tone is professional, positive and enthusiastic. Don't include information related to medical or personal issues, religious affiliations or political views. Keep the letter to one page; however, two pages are acceptable when you are being asked to detail how you meet or exceed each job qualification. When emailing your resume, the cover letter becomes the body of your email.

Close your letter by quickly highlighting any additional experience, expertise, knowledge, skills or abilities you offer and how they will benefit the organization. Reinforce your enthusiasm for the position and your desire to talk further with them about your qualifications. Include your contact information.

Sincerely,

Your name (typed is fine)



It is always a good practice to include a cover letter for every job to which you apply. A cover letter serves as a bridge between your resume and the specific job. It connects the dots between what you offer and the qualifications and competencies listed in the job description. Below are suggested tips when writing a cover letter along with questions to help guide you when writing your cover letter.

Mechanics and Formatting

(Essential for positions requiring writing skills)

- Letter is set up using a standard business format
- Letter is free of capitalization, spelling or grammar errors
- Information is presented in a logical way and is not repetitive
- Your contact information, date and the organization's contact information are located at the top
- Letter has been addressed to the contact person listed on job description
- Tone of letter is professional, positive and enthusiastic
- Letter is free of information related to medical or personal issues, religious affiliations or political views
- Number of sentences that begin with "I" is limited
- Length of letter is kept to one page; however, two pages are acceptable when you are being asked to detail how you meet or exceed each job qualification
- NOTE:** The cover letter becomes the body of your email when emailing your resume directly to a hiring manager

Questions to Guide Your Writing

Introductory Paragraph

- To which position are you applying and how did you learn about the vacancy?
- Why are you interested in the position? *(Keep your reasons positive.)*
- What specifically about the job and/or organization excites you?

Body Paragraphs (1-2)

- How do you meet the qualifications and competencies listed in the job description? *(Touch upon as many as you can meet AND use keywords, phrases and terminology from the job description. You could use a table format with the qualification summarized on the left and how you meet the qualification on the right.)*

Closing Paragraph

- What additional experience, expertise, knowledge, skills or abilities do you offer?
- How will this additional experience, expertise, knowledge, skills or abilities be of benefit to the position or organization?
- How can they contact you?