



## Cover Letters That Get Your Resume *Read*

The job of the cover letter is to entice the reader to read your resume.

### **Some DOs:**

- Make each cover letter unique to the employer and to the job you want.
- Put the same heading on your cover letter that's on your resume.
- Convert the letter to a cover email if it's being submitted with an attached resume.
- If it's going to be copied and pasted into a web site, first convert it to a .txt file and copy it into a company web site in the comment section. Don't leave the "matching" aspects out.
- Do focus on keeping each paragraph short – it makes the letter/cover email easier to read
- If this is to be sent via US mail, put the cover letter on the same kind of paper as your resume: good stock, plain white or off white or light gray.

### **Some DON'Ts:**

- Don't send a stock letter to "Hiring Manager" or "Dear Sir or Madam" because it's immediately apparent that you're sending this to hundreds of people -- and just like people, even companies want to be courted. So match yourself to the job, and tell the company why you want to work for *them*.
- Don't *repeat* what's on your resume; instead, *draw attention* to what's on your resume.
- Just as with your resume, don't turn the letter into a biography or career history. No one cares much about what you've done *unless* it has to do with what you can do *now* – *for them*
- The job of a cover letter is to get the decision maker to read your resume. It also tells them something about your organization and management skills. HR people tell us that the cover letter reveals a lot about a candidate, often knocking them out of the running because it draws no connection to the open job, or it is sloppy, has poor language, or is really meant for some other company.