

DO NOT START YOUR COVER LETTER THIS WAY IF YOU WANT A CHANCE



Summary: Give yourself a fighting chance by not making a mistake by starting off your cover letter with one of these 5 lines.

Cover letters are so much more than just a formality. People often feel that cover letters are not important and often throw one in “just in case.” What these people are failing to realize is that cover letters are often the most important part of a job application and can put you above the competition. In order to get ahead of the competition, the cover letter needs to be of good quality and error free. Part of this is starting the cover letter off right. Do not use these 5 opening lines if you want your cover letter to be read.

“To Whom it May Concern”

This is a generic and meaningless beginning to your cover letter. The person reading the letter will see this introducing line and assume that the rest of the letter is generic and meaningless as well. They will likely stop there and toss your letter and application. You need to show the reader that you have done the necessary research to learn who would be reading the letter. Starting out your letter with a personal address will let the reader know you care.

“My name is...”

Your name is already all over your application. If the reader only reads your first sentence, do you think they will get anything out of knowing your name? You want to start out the letter with an engaging sentence. You want them to read something that will get them interested in who you are and what you have to offer.

“I am writing to express my interest...”

While this opener is not the worst option it is not anything special. This sentence is stating the obvious since a cover letter is about expressing interest in the job. Focus instead on explaining why you are interested in the job, have been following the company for job openings, and why you are so drawn to the company and its mission.

“I’m probably not the best candidate, but...”

This is likely the worst thing you could say to start your cover letter. You may think you are being humble or honest but it shows you have little confidence in yourself and your abilities. The whole point of a job application, especially the cover letter, is to show and prove that you are the best candidate. You should be focusing your letter on your traits that make you the best candidate and why the company should hire you for the position. Don’t give them an easy reason to toss out your application.

“I have enclosed for your consideration my resume, outlining my qualifications...”

Your cover letter should note on some points in your resume, either to elaborate or clarify, but the cover letter is not supposed to be a place to repeat your resume. The reader already has your resume, they don’t need to or want to read it twice. A cover letter should provide new information about who you are that can’t be found in your resume.

How do you like to start your cover letter? Share your examples with us in the comments below.

To learn more about what you should do on your cover letter, read these articles:

- [4 Ways to Ensure Your Cover Letter Gets You an Interview](#)
- [13 Tips to Make Your Cover Letter Better](#)
- [Make Your Cover Letter Stand Out to Recruiters](#)

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