

# Writing a Cover Letter

A cover letter is an essential component when applying for a job. A cover letter (sometimes referred to as a letter of intent) is your opportunity to personalize your application and create interest in you as an applicant. Prior to writing your cover letter, research the company and position, then review your own accomplishments and identify intersections on how your previous work experiences relate to the position you are applying for. Well written cover letters are important in strengthening an employer's interest in a candidate and are a gateway to securing an interview.

## WRITING A COVER LETTER

- A cover letter should be no more than 1 page in length and comprised of 3 paragraphs:
  - » **Paragraph 1:** Describes why you are applying for the job. If you learned about the job/company from a colleague and/or have had a previous introduction to someone at the company, the first paragraph is an opportunity to include this information. The first paragraph should be approximately 3-5 sentences.
  - » **Paragraph 2:** This is the core of the cover letter and describes your skills and qualifications that make you the best candidate for the position. Do not repeat the detailed information that is contained in your CV. However, highlight anything above and beyond your day-to-day responsibilities that differentiates you from other candidates. This paragraph can also provide a space to describe an example of your skills in either clinical skills, operational improvement initiatives, or leadership, while highlighting a patient centered focus in your example.
  - » **Paragraph 3:** The final paragraph is a concise closing to your cover letter, summarizing attributes you would bring to the organization. Include a thank you for consideration of your application and express your eagerness/willingness for further conversation. This paragraph should be no more than 4 sentences in length.

## DO AND DON'T TIPS

- Quality is better than quantity but with enough detail to communicate that you are the right candidate for the position.
- Write the cover letter with a positive tone.
- Avoid popular words that you might not use when speaking. Do not use business buzzwords (out of the box, best in class, added value, etc..)
- Proofread and check for spelling and grammatical errors
- Do not solely rely on spell check
- Format of your cover letter as a professional document, avoid colored fonts and any graphics.
- Avoid emphasizing why the job is right for you, the focus should be why you are the right candidate for the position.
- Avoid emphasizing a skill or skills you need to develop in the cover letter (however, be prepared for this question during the interview).

