

✓ Checklist: Job Application Letters

(Numbers in parentheses refer to the first page of discussion.)

Content

- Is your letter addressed to a specifically named person? (406)
- If your letter is solicited, do you indicate how you heard about the job? (403)
- If your letter is unsolicited, does it have a forceful opening? (406)
- Do you make your case without merely repeating your résumé? (402)
- Do you support all claims with evidence? (403)
- Do you avoid flattery? (408)
- Are you being scrupulously honest? (408)

Arrangement

- Does your introduction get directly to the point? (403)
- Does the body section expand on qualifications sketched in your résumé? (403)
- Does the conclusion restate your interest and request specific action? (403)

Overall

- Do you limit the letter to a single page, whenever possible? (408)
- Is your letter free of “canned” expressions? (408)
- Is your tone confident without being arrogant? (408)
- Do you convey enthusiasm? (408)
- Do you write in plain English? (370)
- Have you trimmed all the fat? (223)
- Have you prepared a fresh letter for each job? (408)
- Have you proofread exhaustively? (21)



Exercises

1. Write a five hundred to seven hundred word personal statement applying to a college for transfer or for graduate or professional school admission. Cover two areas: (1) what you can bring to this school by way of attitude, background, and talent; and (2) what you expect to gain in personal and professional growth. (See pages 709–16)
2. Write a letter applying for a part-time or summer job, in response to a specific ad. Choose an organization related to your career goal. Identify the exact hours and calendar period during which you are free to work.
3. Most of the following sentences need to be overhauled before being included in a letter. Identify the weakness in each statement, and revise as needed.
 - Pursuant to your ad, I am writing to apply for the internship.
 - It is imperative that you let me know of your decision by January 15.