

Writing a letter of interest



What Is a Letter of Interest?

A letter of interest is a letter you send to your target company letting them know that you're interested in working with them and seeing if there are any potential job opportunities that match up with your skill set. This may sound familiar. Your letter of interest might contain similar things to your cover letter, but they are two different documents. A cover letter is a letter you send with your resume when applying to a job opening that has been posted. A letter of interest can be sent at any time whether the company is hiring or not. It isn't sent in response to a specific job. It is a way of introducing yourself to a company that you are interested in and seeing about the possibility of employment with them.

A letter of interest can be very rewarding. Rather than applying to jobs that have been posted and that you have no real interest in, you get to hand choose the companies that you have a desire to work for and make the first contact.

How to Write a Letter of Interest

Just like any contact you have with a potential employer, you must make sure that your letter of interest is well constructed and appropriate. You are using your letter as an opportunity to introduce yourself. Since this will be your first contact you always want to make sure you are presenting yourself in the best possible way. That means taking the time to do it correctly. A well-crafted letter of interest will introduce you to an employer and is a demonstration of your ability to market yourself and highlight your best qualifications. A poorly constructed letter of interest will be forgotten or tossed in the trash. If you do not take the time and effort to put forth your best impression you can, you may tarnish any possibilities of working at your desired company.

Personalizing Your Letter of Interest

Your letter of interest is the first opportunity for you to present yourself as the person they have been looking for. Before you write your letter of interest you need to do research on the company you want to be employed by. You need to take the time and effort to learn about the specific type of people they want to work for them. There are some traits every employer looks for in a potential employee, but most employers have a list of specific traits to their company. Find out what those traits are. Since this is a letter of interest, you are usually not applying to an exact position, so you need to be broader with your definition of the traits you have.

Letter of Interest Basic Format

Your Contact Info

No surprises here. Name, address, telephone number, email and your website

Date

If you don't know what to put here we have much bigger problems

Company Contact Info

Do not start the letter with "to whom it may concern." Do the research and find a specific person to address the letter to. A good place to start would be a hiring manager, another person in HR, or even better, the Manager or Director of the department you envision yourself working in.

Opening Paragraph

Introduce yourself and your intentions.

Qualification/Experience Paragraph

Attack this paragraph with two purposes in mind:

1. Showing how you add value
2. Demonstrating you have the Qualities they value

This is your time to shine. Keep it brief and succinct, because you don't want to come off as arrogant. Pick two to three Qualities that you have and infuse them into this paragraph, and wherever possible, support them with facts. Just don't drone on and on. Save the listing of your job experience for your resume!

Closing Paragraph

Thank them for their time and offer your availability for an "informational interview" at their earliest convenience.

An informational interview is both an opportunity for you to learn more about the company and the various positions within the company AND a great way for you to meet the right people in the organization you are interested in. More importantly, it's an opportunity for you to let your award-winning personality shine, and if executed properly, can help you land a job at the company of your dreams!

Signature