

<p style="text-align: center;">Seven Common Cover Letter Mistakes Provided by UK's James W. Stuckert Career Center</p>

While it is important to write a cover letter for each position for which you are applying, a poorly written cover letter can land your application in the trash can. Don't make any of these common mistakes!

1. Don't address the letter "Dear Sirs". The person reading your letter may be a woman who won't be impressed with this salutation. Instead, find out the name of the person who will be reviewing your résumé by contacting the company's human resources department, or address your letter "Attention: Human Resources Department" or "Hiring Manager" if they won't give you a name.
2. Don't forget to state the position for which you are applying. Including reference numbers can be helpful as many companies advertise more than one position at a time.
3. Don't send a cover letter that has not been thoroughly proofread. Typographical and grammatical errors (such as confusing "you're" with "your") create a poor impression. Prevent this by meeting with your career counselor to critique your resume.
4. Don't focus on what you want or what you will gain from the experience. Focus instead on what the employer will gain by hiring you. Focus on the value you can bring to the employer, such as increasing revenues or cutting costs.
5. Don't send a generic letter. You can make a much better impression by mentioning the company name and doing a little research so you can say something flattering about the company. You can learn what companies pride themselves on, including their products and achievements, by checking their web sites or visiting the career centers Vault.
6. Don't appear desperate. Avoid comments such as "I've already sent out a bunch of résumés without much luck." Employers may wonder if there's a good reason why no one else has hired you.
7. Don't challenge them to hire you. Employers will be turned off if you say something like "It's your loss if you don't hire me." Instead, show them, with examples of your accomplishments, why you would be an asset to their company.