

Cover Letter Video Transcript

I know exactly what your cover letter says, yet I can assure you I'm not a mind reader. How do I know this? Let me guess. It's full paged, single-spaced, block paragraph, four paragraphs arranged exactly like this.

Paragraph 1: How I heard about the job

Paragraph 2: Why I want the job

Paragraph 3: Why I'd be great for the job

Paragraph 4: How I'm going to follow up about the job

In addition, you've taken what's already on your resume and simply rewritten it in paragraph form. Virtually, every college student writes the exact same cover letter!

Recruiting Directors are flooded with resumes and they only spend about fifteen seconds looking at each one. Now try tacking on a full-page, extremely boring document that basically says what's already on the resume. How many cover letters do you think actually get read? None.

That being said, you still need to create one to show that you're truly interested in the job. But here's the trick: make that cover letter different. Think about your cover letter as a teaser ad for your resume. Make it short, keep some of the sentences just a few words long, keep some of the paragraphs one sentence. Make it personal, and be conversational. But beware, there's a fine line between clever and stupid!

Let's take a look.

Dear Ms. Marhula,

Baby food. Yes, baby food got me interested in advertising. I was taking my first advertising class in college and we were comparing Gerber and Beach Nut. I was fascinated by the power of advertising to effect attitude and behavior especially in such a creative way.

How can you read that first paragraph and not want to read a little more? Now this certainly isn't a perfect cover letter for everyone. But, it does give you a sense of what you want to do. Some other great topics can be: a unique or opportunity or great experience that you have had, a strong passion for the job responsibilities, or even a referral that you have to the company or within the industry. Your career center will definitely have some other great ideas. But, the key is to tell a story, your story, and not just what is on the resume. Good luck.