

# Guide to Competitive Cover Letters & Preparing References

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## Cover Letter Tips

- Use the same font format and letterhead style as your resume
- Keep it short – only one page
- Provide your name, address, phone number and e-mail
- Avoid using common phrases like “enclosed please find”, “Dear Sir” or “To Whom in May Concern” when it is possible find a specific person’s name, if not use a general title such as “Hiring Manager”
- Refer to what the company does, and how your skills, abilities and experience can be a valuable contribution to their team
- Refer to the job you are interested in and how you heard about the job
- Highlight your most relevant skills – identify one thing about you that is unique and is relevant to this position
- **Proofread** your letter, and ask someone to read it as well
- Include a professionally appropriate e-mail address
- Writing a cover letter is an opportunity to demonstrate your writing skills

# Cover Letter Work Sheet

**Your Contact information – Create your own letterhead – the same as your resume**

## **Date**

The date you are sending the letter

## **Company Name, address, and Contact (if possible)**

ABC Company  
123 Street  
Barrie, ON L4N 123

**Attention:** Hiring Manager

## **Salutation**

Dear: Employer's specific name if not, "Hiring Manager"

## **Re: Job Title/Job Number**

## **First Paragraph or opening sentence**

Mention something about yourself to convince the employer that they should call you for an interview. Grab their attention with your opening sentence. Also state the position you are applying for.

## **Second Paragraph or second sentence**

Relate your skills specific to the job – years of experience, your skills that would be valuable to the job you are applying for

## **Third paragraph or third sentence**

State the skills you would like to use again and that the employer is seeking

## **Closing Paragraph**

Thank the employer for their consideration. Include your phone number and let them know that you are available to discuss this position further

## **Complimentary Close**

Sincerely, Kindest Regards, Yours truly

**Signature** – Remember to sign if you are faxing, mailing or handing it in.

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## Example: Advertised Position

### **Jessica Jobseeker**

123 Fast Lane, Somewhere ON L4N 3H8

(705) 777-7777

[jjobseeker@gmail.com](mailto:jjobseeker@gmail.com)

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February 4, 20XX

NuComm Tech  
234 Winters Drive  
Barrie, ON L4N 8K9

Dear Human Resource Manager:

**Re: Production Lead Hand – OP 234**

My hard work ethic, dedication and ability to adapt to any situation should harmonize well with the current position you have available as a Production Lead Hand.

My former position as a supervisor has equipped me with the ability to motivate others while keeping an open mind when resolving conflict. Ensuring quality of product and working within a safe environment were always my focus.

Remaining flexible and versatile with a willingness to learn are key traits I value. My long-term dedication to the same company made me a valuable asset as I learned many facets of the industry.

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how my experience would be an asset to your company. Please contact me at (705) 777-7777. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Jobseeker

**Example: Unsolicited contact**

## **Joe Journeyman**

333 Apprentice Lane ♦ Barrie ON ♦ L4N 0J0 ♦ (705) 777-5555  
jjourneyman@gmail.com

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February 4, 20XX

Car Care Automotive  
434 Mapletree  
Barrie, ON L4N 3J3  
Attention: Mr. Smith

Dear Mr. Smith:

In researching, I found your company as top auto maintenance and repair operation. I am an experienced licensed mechanic with up-to-date skills in all aspects of automotive repair.

I would like to offer my services as a licensed mechanic. With over seven year's experience, most recently at Black's Automotive, I am up to date with the ever changing automotive industry.

My proven track record along with excellent evaluations from previous superiors demonstrates my dedication and commitment to providing excellent service and mechanical ability.

Thank you for your time and I will call you on Monday, February 14, 2011. Should you wish to contact me prior to this date, you may call me at (705) 777-5555.

Sincerely,

Joe Journeyman

**Example: Referral/Networking Letter**

## **Mary Merry**

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7172 Whispering Pines, Forest, ON L4M 2S6 ☎ (705) 222-2222  
marymerry@gmail.com

February 4, 20XX

Arthur Diamond  
DIAMOND, ESTER, AND GRACE  
666 Chance Avenue  
Memory Lane, ON. L4M 2T8

Dear Mr. Diamond:

Upon learning of the available position of Legal Assistant through Harry Stevenson a mutual contact, I believe I would be well suited for the position you have available. With over seven years of experience working for a mid-size law firm specializing in Patent Law, I bring the following skills and work experiences for the legal secretary position you have available:

- Ability to type and take shorthand at 80+ wpm
- Intermediate user with the latest versions of Word, WordPerfect and PCLaw
- Excellent spelling and grammar skills with particular attention to detail
- Energy, enthusiasm, and the ability to work independently

Punctual, hard-working and professional, I am also accustomed to working under tight deadlines and willing to work overtime as required to get the job done.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss my suitability for this position. Please contact me at (705) 222-2222. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mary Merry

## **Resources to Help Target Your Cover Letter:**

*If no job posting/description is available, it is recommended that you research typical job duties/requirements to assist in writing your cover letter. Some resources to help are:*

### **National Occupational Classification (NOC)**

**<https://noc.esdc.gc.ca>**

*Listing of over 25,000 occupations & related descriptions/requirements*

### **Job Bank**

**[www.jobbank.gc.ca/home](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home)**

*Not just an online job bank! Labour Market Research: options for “Job Search”, “Explore Careers”, “Employers” and “Job Market Trends”*

## Jessica Jobseeker

123 Fast Lane, Somewhere ON L4N 3H8  
(705) 777-7777  
jjobseeker@gmail.com

### References

**Bob Smith, Branch Manager**

*Previous supervisor at XYZ Supermarket*  
ABC Cosmetics  
123 Fake Street, Barrie ON 1X1 2Y2  
**705-111-1111 ext. 222**  
**bob@fakemail.ca**

**Kate Jones, Office Assistant**

*Previous colleague at XYZ Supermarket*  
Office Supplies 'R' Us  
456 Fake Road, Barrie ON 2X2 3Y3  
**705-222-2222**  
**kate@pretend.ca**

**John Doe, Instructor**

*Previous co-op/academic supervisor at ABC College*  
ABC College, Barrie Campus  
1 Fake Lane, Barrie ON 3X3 4Y4  
**705-333-3333 ext. 444**  
**doej@fakecollege.ca**