

# Cover Letter Guide

## Career Services

A cover letter is your opportunity to take charge and tell the reader of your resume what you want them to know. You can add additional information or tell the story that you want heard. This is your chance to show a potential employer how well you communicate, a brief view of your personality and your level of professionalism.

Remember, your cover letter “covers” your resume. So, it needs the same careful attention and perfection that your resume received. However, a cover letter is really very simple and brief. The outline below will help you construct a first-class cover letter.

### Address and Date

You must make a serious effort to address your cover letter to a specific individual. Just get on the phone and call the employer and ask.

### Opening

Three sentences. That’s all you have to have. Use this section to tell employers:

- Who you are...
- Why you are writing (the position that interests you)...
- How you heard about the position...

### Flattery and Sales Pitch

Do 20 minutes worth of internet research and find some fact that interests you about the organization. Use this information to construct two or three sentences on **why you chose this employer**. Then, tell the reader why they are interested in you. **Think of three to five reasons that this employer is interested in you. List them and back them up with an example** of the characteristic or ability you are highlighting. Example: Organization. As a member of the Student Union Activities Board, I managed a group of nine fellow students who organized a weekend-long event with multiple activities, concessions and approximately 700 guests on campus.

### Closing

The closing paragraph can be a three-sentence paragraph. First, thank the reader. Second, tell them when you will contact them to arrange a meeting or interview. Third, offer the reader the chance to contact you if they need additional information.

### Signature

Don’t forget to sign this beautiful piece of work after you print it on your resume paper.

### One last thing...

Run spell check. Proof the letter. Have two friends proof it. Proof it again. Bring it to Career Services. Proof it one last time before you put it in the envelope.