

# COVER LETTER GUIDE FOR BUSINESS STUDENTS

## Employer Perspective:

- Hiring managers will glance at the cover letter but concentrate on the resume. If the resume matches the specific job requirements, the cover letter is typically read fully.
- **When reading the cover letter, the employment manager will usually look to see if it is a generic cover letter or if it is specific/personal to the company. They may look closer at the ones who have a connection to that company (i.e. referral, networking event at college).**

## Content of a Cover Letter:

Regardless of what type of cover letter you are writing, the basic format is the same. Use the formula below as a general guideline for all cover letters.

### I. Opening paragraph

- Expresses your interest in the organization and/or position
- Include how you heard about the organization (i.e. website, referral, networking event)
- Demonstrates your knowledge of the organization or industry – **THIS IS KEY**

### II. Body

- Highlights a few major skill sets with examples to prove you possess that skill
- Focuses on you and how your qualifications match their needs
- Could be 1-2 paragraphs

### III. Closing

- Reiterates/Summarizes your interest and fit within the organization
- Requests action – either an interview or follow up

## Additional Tips:

- Keep it to one page
- Make an appointment with a career counselor/advisor to look over your cover letter
- Make sure it is error proof (grammar, spelling, sentence structure)
- Be concise and state skills with specific examples that are relevant to the position
- Don't make it generic – that first paragraph should show the reader that you've done your research and have knowledge about the company and industry



# JOB SKILLS INVENTORY CHECKLIST

**Purpose:** The purpose of this skills inventory is to help you come up with different skills that you may be having a hard time thinking of yourself.

**How to use the Skills Inventory:** The following is a sample list of skills found in a cross section of careers. Circle every skill that applies to you. Write down examples of situations in your professional life that demonstrate these skills. Then try to incorporate these skills into your cover letter.

administering medication	enforcing rules and regulations	picking out important information
administering programs	entertaining people	planning organizational needs
advising people	estimating physical space	predicting futures
analyzing data	evaluating programs	preparing written communications
analyzing problems	event planning	prioritizing work
auditing financial reports	expressing ideas orally to individuals or groups	promoting events
being thorough	finding information	proposing ideas
budgeting expenses	gathering information	public speaking
calculating numerical data	generating accounts	questioning others
checking for accuracy	handling complaints	raising funds
classifying records	handling detail work	reading volumes of material relating to the public
coaching individuals	imagining new solutions	reporting information
collaborating ideas	interacting with people at different levels	running meetings
collecting money	inventing new ideas	selling ideas
comparing results	listening to others	selling products
compiling statistics	maintaining a high level of activity	setting priorities
comprehending ideas	making decisions	setting up demonstrations
conducting interviews	managing an organization	setting work/committee goals
conducting meetings	meeting new people	summarizing information
coping with deadlines	meeting people	supervising employees
counseling/consulting people	motivating others	taking personal responsibility
creating new ideas	negotiating/arbitrating conflicts	teaching/instructing and training individuals
deciding uses of money	operating equipment	thinking in a logical manner
defining a problem	organizing files	thinking of creative ideas
delegating responsibility	organizing tasks	writing for publication
determining a problem	overseeing operations	writing letters, papers, proposals
developing a climate of enthusiasm, teamwork, and cooperation	persuading others	writing reports
developing plans for projects		
displaying artistic ideas		
editing work		

