

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 resume.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| 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/instructin 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 | | |

