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  questioning others
calculating numerical data  generating accounts  raising funds
checking for accuracy  handling complaints  reading volumes of material relating to the public
classifying records  handling detail work  reporting information
coaching individuals  imagining new solutions  running meetings
collaborating ideas  interacting with people at different levels  selling ideas
collecting money  inventing new ideas  selling products
comparing results  listening to others  setting priorities
compiling statistics  maintaining a high level of activity  setting up demonstrations
comprehending ideas  making decisions  summarizing information
conducting interviews  managing an organization  supervising employees
coordinating meetings  meeting new people  taking personal responsibility
coping with deadlines  meeting people  teaching/instructing and training individuals
counseling/consulting people  motivating others  thinking in a logical manner
creating new ideas  negotiating/arbitrating conflicts  thinking of creative ideas
deciding uses of money  operating equipment  writing for publication
defining a problem  organizing files  writing letters, papers, proposals
defining a problem  organizing tasks  writing reports
determining a problem  overseeing operations
developing a climate of enthusiasm, teamwork, and cooperation
developing plans for projects
developing plans for projects
displaying artistic ideas
editing work