

Current Literature

You have a great resume, you are prepared for the interview and you are in job search mode; however, you are missing one thing - a COVER LETTER.

Whether it be a letter in response to a specific advertised opening, a referral or just an expression of general interest in the company, a cover letter is a key component of your job search.

According to the National Association of College & Employers (NACE), your cover letter is one of the first samples employers will have of your communication skills, which is critically important to your career.

Letters should be functional, understandable, easy to read and pleasant in tone.

WHY DO I NEED A COVER LETTER?

- To introduce a prospective employer to your unique talents and skills.
- To highlight your resume by identifying how you are qualified for the position and why the employer should hire you.
- To demonstrate your knowledge of the industry and company (after doing in-depth research).
- Allows a prospective employer to learn about your qualifications/interest in the company and to assess your communication skills.
- To attract attention of the employer and stand out among the hundreds of resumes an employer might receive.

EMPLOYERS SAY...

“Pay special attention to grammar, spelling and neatness. Your cover letter should represent your very best efforts.”

“Use the KISS theory. Keep it short, simple and not longer than one page. Each paragraph should have four or fewer sentences.”

“Use concrete specific language and examples to give the reader a good sense of what you have done and who you are. We want to see that your skills are a good match for our company.”

“Don’t ignore the stated criteria/qualifications in the job description - if you do not address the employer’s needs, your cover letter and resume will find its way to the “NO” pile.”

“Do not forget to attach or include your resume.”

“Be confident, but not cocky.”

WHAT DO I INCLUDE IN A COVER LETTER?

Paragraph 1 - why you are writing, name of position you are seeking and where you learned of the opportunity or who referred you.

Paragraph 2 - why are you interested in the opportunity. How will you be a good match and how you will your education and experience benefit the company?

Paragraph 3 - a continuation of paragraph 2 (if you have additional information).

Paragraph 4 - conclusion. Suggest a meeting to discuss your qualifications and interest. Thank the reader for his/her consideration and that you are looking forward to hearing from them.

WHAT DO I DO?...

- If I don’t know the recipient’s name—how should I start my cover letter?

Do not use the common introductions such as “To whom it may concern” or Dear Sir or Madam.” Contact the employer and obtain the name and title of the person to whom to address the letter.

- If the job postings asks me to include my salary requirements. How should I address that in the letter?

Do not give an exact dollar amount. If you must address the salary issue, simply give a salary range.

- To make my cover letter stand out?

Do research and demonstrate knowledge of the company. Show how your skills will be a fit for the opening.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Come to a **CSPD Cover Letter Workshop**, “Under Cover,” where you will learn about the do’s and don’ts of letters that lead to the employers “YES” pile.

Visit the CSPD website for additional cover letter tips at <http://www.sbm.temple.edu/cspd>

Quick Tips

DO...

- Send a letter to an actual person (who has power to hire you), not “Dear sir or madam” or “To whom it may concern.”
- Be original. Tailor your cover letter to the specific company.
- Generate interest immediately by stating your purpose in the opening paragraph.
- Include contact information (full address, phone number, email).
- Close your cover letter with a request for an interview.
- Keep it brief – 1 page maximum.

DON'T...

- Let careless errors send you to the “NO” pile.
- Make salary demands - focus instead on how you can contribute to the organization.
- Include negative or personal information.
- Address the recipient by his/her first name.
- Send Xerox copies.
- Use “I believe” or “I feel” statements. Instead, use more direct language.

CSPD Overview

The Center for Student Professional Development (CSPD) is a comprehensive Fox School of Business resource focused on preparing you for entry into the professional business environment.

Besides academic preparation, “professional development” is an important component of your university experience. Because of that, the Fox School of Business has integrated professional development into the multi-year curriculum.

As an undergraduate business major at the Fox School, you have access to the services and resources of CSPD. Your utilization of CSPD is an investment in your professional development that will ensure you develop the requisite skills to locate meaningful internships, co-ops and permanent jobs.



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Center for Student Professional Development

On-the-Go Series

COVER LETTERS

