



Create Cover Letters that Command Attention

Strategy is crucial when it comes to getting your application noticed. You might have to get through an Applicant Tracking System (ATS), make an impression on a hiring manager who is taking a 20 second skim read – or both. Here are some ideas on how to make an impression with your cover letter.

Scrutinize the Job Posting

- Print or save the posting and highlight the skills, education, and experience you match.
- Highlight industry terminology, buzzwords, vocabulary, and anything else that stands out.
- Get a feel for the tone of the posting. Is it formal, casual, light, traditional, funny?

Investigate the Company

- Do you already know someone who works there that you can connect with? If not, see if you can use your personal network or LinkedIn
- Visit their website and do a Google search to see what stands out to you (Have they been in the news? Done something new? Gone through a change? How do they present their brand? How are they different from their competition? Do you get a sense of their company culture?)

Put It Together and Ask These Questions

- Why are you a great fit for this job at this company? Keep your answer reader centric. (Paragraph 1)
- In what way are you MOST qualified for this job? Back it up with a compelling example and make a connection to this job. (Paragraph 2)
- What is another way you are qualified for this job? Maybe this example highlights an impressive result, outcome, or achievement. Link it to this job. (Paragraph 3)
- What is your personal hook? Briefly summarize your main qualifications and add something personal or unique that leaves an impression with your reader. Thank them and invite action. (Paragraph 4)

Final Check

- Check that you have used the key words and vocabulary you highlighted and that the tone of your letter matches the job posting.
- Use business letter format and make sure it is no longer than 1 page.
- Don't begin every sentence with "I"; vary your sentence structure to make it interesting and engaging.
- Proofread carefully and have someone else look over it. Book an appointment with a Career Advisor in the Experiential Learning Hub for professional advice.