THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Quick Tip Sheet

CENTER FOR CAREER AND EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Cover Letter

What is a Cover Letter?

The cover letter is a crucial part of the application process. There is no such thing as a "form" cover letter. Each letter you write should be unique and targeted to a specific employer and position. The cover letter is a place for you to expand on and highlight the great experiences you've had that are relevant to the job. One or two of your most impressive examples will suffice. The cover letter should be one page only. Your cover letter also allows the employer to gauge your writing skills. While a perfect cover letter won't necessarily get you a job, a poorly written cover letter will certainly keep you from getting an interview.

Step 1: Preparation

Before writing your cover letter it is important that you get some information in order. First, it is well-worth sitting down and making a list of the most important qualifications stated in the job listing. Then, look over your resume and high-light experiences, courses and projects that meet these criteria. Based on the job description key words and what you know about the job, what is the company looking for in a candidate?

Job Qualifications and Requirements	Experience	Coursework/Projects	Degree/Credentials

Add your Resume Header Here!

	Date
Hiring Manager's Name/Title	
Company Name	
Company Address	
Company City, State, Zip	
Dear	, (Address by their full name if you have the information. If there is no
	anager, Hiring Professional, or Search Committee.)

Step 3: Opening Paragraph (Direct, and engage the reader)

- 1. Identify the job you are applying to.
 - a. Make sure to include exact job title and job ID number
- 2. How did you discover the job was available?
 - a. Job board, internet, placement center, professional meeting, referral, person in hiring firm, career fair, recruiter, etc.
- 3. Provide one to two sentences on a summary of your qualifications for the position, <u>or</u> what excites you about the position
 - a. Be specific in your qualifications, such as mentioning years of experience, degree path, or certain skills you have.
 - b. Be specific about what interests you in the position or organization, such as the community impact, success rate in their work, or company's reputation.

Step 4: Middle Paragraph (Why should this person/company be interested in you?)

- 1. Identify the company's needs and provide how you match those needs.
 - a. Reference the experiences, courses, projects, skills, approaches, and abilities you listed on the first page
- 2. Determine the highest priority to the company and give specific examples how you meet those qualifications.
- 3. Create a few short statements that include keywords from the job description.

Step 5: Closing Paragraph (Closing, add something new)

- 1. What have you not said?
 - Consider sharing professional behaviors you have not shared above, such as the skills your colleagues see in you.
 - Alternatively, you may share what interests you in this field (professionally).
- 2. How can you show your gratitude for their consideration in closing?



