Cover Letters

What is the purpose of a cover letter?
Cover letters accompany your resume in your application and allow you to introduce yourself and your experiences to a potential employer. **Before you start writing, ask yourself:** How do your experiences, talents, and competencies align with those required in the job description? Why do you want this role at this organization? Why are you a good fit?

This is a checklist to help with the mechanics of your cover letter. To discuss your goals and career development more broadly, schedule an appointment with a Career Coach through EagleLink. For more information and sample cover letters visit [bit.ly/bccoverletterguide](http://bit.ly/bccoverletterguide).

Format
- Keep your cover letter to one page in length.
- Include contact information at the top – yours and theirs.
- Be sure to address the cover letter to a specific person whenever possible. If you cannot find the name of an individual, use a job title (Campus Recruiter, Hiring Manager).
- Include a professional salutation, e.g. “Dear Mr. Smith:” and closing, e.g. “Sincerely, Jane Doe”.
- Use size 10-12 font, black.
- Professional font type (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Cambria).
- Make sure to proof read and spell check your cover letter.
- Have others (the Career Center, a mentor or faculty member) review your cover letter.

Content
- Create a customized cover letter for each position to which you apply. Tailor each letter to the organization and position.
- **Introduction:** Introduce yourself and why you are interested in the position. Answer the question: Why you are interested in this position and the organization? Show you did your company research.
- **Body:** Why are you a good fit for this position? Highlight 2-3 of your major accomplishments and experiences. Rather than restating your resume, expand on experiences that are directly related to responsibilities and requirements in the job description. This section may be more than one paragraph.
- **Closing:** thank the reader for his/her time and consideration. Provide your contact information.
- Maintain a warm but professional tone.
- Use simple, direct language, and use “I” sparingly.
- Vary sentence structure and make sure to use transitions between paragraphs

Additional Information
- Always submit a cover letter unless you are specifically instructed not to submit one.
- A cover letter may be requested after an event like a networking night or a career fair. In the first paragraph, note where you met the individual, e.g. "It was a pleasure meeting you earlier this week at the Boston College Career Fair.”
- Once you have written a cover letter, visit the Career Center during drop-in hours or schedule an appointment to have your cover letter critiqued.
Congratulations on writing a great cover letter!

Now that you’ve finished this document, have you considered how you will prepare for interviews? For tips about interviewing, check out the Career Center’s interviewing guide at bit.ly/bcinterviewguide or consider scheduling a practice interview with a Career Coach.

Sample Cover Letter

Your Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Date

Name of Person, Title  
Company/Organization  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. /Ms. /Dr. ___:

Introduction: State your reason for writing. Name the specific position or type of work for which you are applying. Mention how you heard about the position or who referred you to apply. Explain why you are interested in working for that organization or in that field of work and what your qualifications are.

Body (1-2 Paragraphs): Highlight two or three achievements that relate to the position and field. Mention specific qualifications from the job description that make you a good fit for the employer’s needs. This is an opportunity to explain in more detail relevant items listed on your resume.

Conclusion: Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration. Include your contact information so that the employer knows how you can be reached.

Sincerely,

Your Name