

# COVER LETTER

*Professional Skills Guide*



UNF

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Career Success Center  
College of Arts and Sciences

# Professional Skills Guide: COVER LETTER

A cover letter is a professional document that often accompanies a resume. The cover letter offers the candidate an opportunity to further **introduce themselves** to a potential employer and should explain what **value they will bring to the company**.



**Introduce Yourself**



**One-Page**

The length of a cover letter may vary by industry and level of experience, but most often, the cover letter is a **one page document**.

Typically, employers will specify whether or not they require this document within the application or job posting. Even if a cover letter is not required as part of the application process, **it is always a good idea to include one**. It is an opportunity to show that you are willing to go above and beyond, and also serves as an opportunity to further express your **interest in the position**.



**Always include when applying**



**Communication Skills**

The cover letter document allows an applicant to express **why they are a good fit for the role**. The cover letter is also an opportunity to **fill in any gaps of information** that may be missing on the resume. A cover letter has the potential to **reveal your written communication skills** to an employer and gives the candidate the opportunity to **show their personality**.

Depending on the position, the employer may ask an applicant to include or address specific topics or respond to specific questions in the cover letter.

**What to include**

Although college students often seek internships to gain experience, employers are often more interested in what the student is going to offer their company rather than what kind of valuable experience the student will gain from the opportunity. Thus, it is ineffective to focus too much of the cover letter on what you hope to gain.

# WHAT TO INCLUDE:

The cover letter should cover the general areas listed below:

1<sup>st</sup>

PARAGRAPH:

## **Who you are and why you are applying:**

State why you are writing, name the position or type of work for which you are applying, and mention how you heard of the opening.

2<sup>nd</sup>

PARAGRAPH:

## **Your Skills Experience and Qualifications:**

If you have had experience, be sure to point out your particular achievements or other qualifications in this field or type of work. Illustrate your training, interests, knowledge, and experience.

3<sup>rd</sup>

PARAGRAPH:

## **You and the Company:**

What do you know about this company? Why are you interested in working here rather than somewhere else? What do you like about them? Why are you a good fit for this company? The company is more interested in what you have to offer them and less interested in how they are going to help you grow. Explain why you are interested in working for the employer, and specify your reasons for desiring this type of work.

4<sup>th</sup>

PARAGRAPH:

## **Closing Section:**

Wrap up the document and restate contact information in this paragraph. Pull the document together. Thank the company for their consideration. Have an appropriate closing to pave the way for the interview by asking for an appointment, by giving your phone number, or by offering some similar suggestion to facilitate an immediate and favorable reply

# COVER LETTER DO & DO NOT

Do

- Follow a specific letter format
- Personalize each cover letter to every position applied for
- Match your qualifications (knowledge, skills, experience, and education ) to the position
- List the name of the specific position being applied for
- Showcase your ability to meet the company's needs
- Include key words from the job posting
- Elaborate on requirements for the position that are not commonly listed on the resume such as ability to relocate or travel, context about a passion or interest in the field

Do  
Not

- Write out every single thing (or most things) that are on your resume
- Simply create a sentence or paragraph version of your resume
- Fill the cover letter with unrelated/ Irrelevant experience
- Write an essay or research paper on the company

**Style 1: Header that matches the resume header used. This method creates consistency between the documents.**

Your Header (name and contact info)

Contact name  
Contact's Title  
Contact's Department  
Name of Organization  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

Date

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Contact's Last Name: Address the document to a specific person when possible.

**First Paragraph: Who you are and why you are applying:** State why you are writing, name the position or type of work for which you are applying, and mention how you heard of the opening.

**Second Paragraph: Your Skills Experience and Qualifications:** If you have had experience, be sure to point out your particular achievements or other qualifications in this field or type of work. Illustrate your training, interests, knowledge, and experience.

**Third Paragraph: You and the Company:** What do you know about this company? Why are you interested in working here rather than somewhere else? What do you like about them? Why are you a good fit for this company? The company is more interested in what you have to offer them and less interested in how they are going to help you grow. Explain why you are interested in working for the employer, and specify your reasons for desiring this type of work.

**Fourth Paragraph: Closing Section:** Wrap up the document and restate contact information in this paragraph. Pull the document together. Thank the company for their consideration. Have an appropriate closing to pave the way for the interview by asking for an appointment, by giving your phone number, or by offering some similar suggestion to facilitate an immediate and favorable reply.

Sincerely,

(sign your name here)

Type Your Full Name

## Style 2: Business Letter Block Format

Your Name  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

Contact name  
Contact's Title  
Contact's Department  
Name of Organization  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

Date

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Contact's Last Name: Address the document to a specific person when possible.

**First Paragraph: Who you are and why you are applying:** State why you are writing, name the position or type of work for which you are applying, and mention how you heard of the opening.

**Second Paragraph: Your Skills Experience and Qualifications:** If you have had experience, be sure to point out your particular achievements or other qualifications in this field or type of work. Illustrate your training, interests, knowledge, and experience.

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Sincerely,

(sign your name here)

Type Your Full Name

# Osprey CL Sample

1 UNF Drive Jacksonville, FL 32246 | 904.555.5555 | [OzzieOsprey@unf.edu](mailto:OzzieOsprey@unf.edu)

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**September 10, 2020**

Vivian Senior  
Associate Director  
University of North Florida  
Career Success Center  
1 UNF Drive Jacksonville, FL

Dear Ms. Vivian Senior:

I am an qualified student seeking to apply my psychological knowledge to a part-time experience working directly with people. Please consider this letter and the attached resume as part of my application for the part-time Peer Career Coach Position at the University of North Florida's Career Success Center. In August of 2025, I will graduate from the University of North Florida with my Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology. My coursework in psychology has sparked my interest in the field of counseling and has given me knowledge of and experience with understanding interpersonal interactions..

Multiple qualities make me an excellent candidate for this position. First, my knowledge of student life alongside my current university experience will help me relate well to the student population. Furthermore, I have an inherent need for organization and time management skills that will allow me to be effective within this role. I have used my outstanding written and verbal communication skills while giving class presentations and group projects and am comfortable giving presentations if needed. I have also delivered excellent customer service in my two years as a waitress at Metro Diner. Another qualification for this position I hold is my approval for Federal Work Study. If accepted for position, I hope to enhance my knowledge of resumes and the job search process.

I am attracted to working for the University of North Florida Career Success Center for many reasons. I am a Jacksonville local and am excited to give back to community. I am passionate about the UNF student population and hope to learn more about one on one work with them. I hope to participate in outreach and marketing activities and support the center through administering presentations as needed. I admire the mission within the center, and aspire to be a part of the task to prepare students for their future careers.

As you will see from the enclosed resume, I have already begun to gather relevant skills for this position. I have a drive to succeed and the desire to be a life-long learner that has fueled my success this far. I look forward to speaking with you to further discuss this opportunity with the University of North Florida and will follow up with the office next week. If you need to contact me before then, I can be reached at (904) 555-5555 or [OzzieOsprey@unf.edu](mailto:OzzieOsprey@unf.edu) . Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ozzie Osprey