

Career Services  
and The Writing Center  
Present:



**SUCCESSFUL COVER  
LETTERS AND RESUMES**

# Cover Letters: Your Chance to Shine



- Get a name
- Address to the appropriate person
- Spell all names correctly
- Detail relevant skills in a concise and accurate manner
- Include significant key words listed in the job description
- Match your skills to the job
- Build interest in the resume

# Cover Letters (cont.)



- Create a consistent look and identity for all related documents
- Limit to one page
- Mention the resume in the body and show it as an “enclosure”
- Ask for the interview
- Thank the recipients for their time
- Ensure that the letter is easy to read and navigate
- Proofread, proofread, proofread!

# Cover Letters: The Formula



## Paragraph 1:

- The position you are applying for
- How you learned of the opening
- State that your skills are a good match

## Paragraph 2:

- Highlight specifics about you and your accomplishments
- A good place to highlight “soft skills”
- Show knowledge of the company and industry

## Paragraph 3:

- Mention the resume
- Ask for the interview
- Make it easy for them to contact you

# Insert Letter Example



# Resumes: Your Life in 15 Seconds



- Employers spend approximately 15 seconds reading your resume
- Half are NEVER read
- Each component can make or break the package
- Poor writing or formatting =
- Unprofessional email address ([bikerbabe@yahoo.com](mailto:bikerbabe@yahoo.com)) =
- Summaries and profiles waste space
- Accomplishments are featured—quantify whenever possible



# Further Resume Advice



- Consider your audience
- Be honest
- Know your resume—it's a starting point for interview conversation
- Make use of the “hot zone”
- Keep it brief—one page unless you have over 6 years of experience
- Include a targeted objective
- State the facts using dates, verbs, active voice
- Format with bullet lists
- Use reverse chronological order
- Include month and year for work experience dates

# Resume Advice: Dos



- Make it easy for the employer to locate pertinent information quickly
  - Clear headings
  - Spacing—1” page margins
  - Bold or underline for easy readability
- Arrange sections in order of importance:  

Education	Experience	Skills
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- Make good use of transferable skills
- Use the vocabulary of your field
- Favor concrete language rather than pompous terms
- Avoid redundancies



# Resumes (cont.)



## Before:

Worked with businesses to carry out United Way fundraising goals

Helped accountants with various public accounting projects

Developed marketing plans to promote concert series on campus

## After:

Partnered with more than 20 area businesses to raise \$15k for United Way, exceeding goal by 23%

Assisted accountants auditing \$55,000 in accounts receivables for company's largest client

Developed fully integrated marketing campaign distributed to 10,000 students resulting in 12% increase in concert attendance

# Resume Advice: Don'ts



- Over design
- Write your autobiography
- Repeat yourself
- Use hard-to-read or microscopic fonts
- Display graphics or watermarks
- List references (use a separate sheet)
- Address salary
- Include personal statistics or photos

# Six Things Guaranteed to Screen You Out



- No mention of position applying for
- Vague or inappropriate objective
- Poor quality materials—paper quality, handwritten
- Wrong qualifications for the job
- Too long
- Misspellings, poor editing, and poor grammar

# Show Your Gratitude



- Send a thank-you message within 24 hours of your interview
- Type the letter; email if employer is making a fast decision
- Mention specifics of the meeting including something just the two of you discussed—help them remember you
- Show that you appreciate their time
- Reiterate your interest and strengths
- Use for damage control if necessary
- Thank each of the people you interviewed with—(get their business cards when you interview)
- Spell names correctly
- Be brief

# Thank You



**PLEASE SEE A CONSULTANT AT THE  
RESUME AND COVER-LETTER BAR  
FOR ONE-ON-ONE ASSISTANCE**