



COVER LETTERS

GRADE LEVEL 10-12



"TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR FINANCES"

Time to Complete: 60 minutes

NATIONAL CONTENT STANDARDS

Family and Consumer Science Standards: 1.1.1, 1.1.6, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.8

National Council on Economic Education Teaching Standards: 13

National Standards for Business Education

- Career Development: V.B.3, V.C.4
- Economics: VI.2
- Personal Finance:

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Discover the importance of a cover letter.
- Develop a cover letter that meets quality standards.

INTRODUCTION

A cover letter is a three to four paragraph business communication that usually accompanies a job applicant's resume. The purpose of the cover letter is to interest the employer enough to want to get to know the applicant better through an interview.

A well written cover letter signifies an individual's written communication skills, organization, and professionalism. When writing a cover letter, the job applicant has the opportunity to persuade an employer they are the most qualified for the job, to demonstrate any research that has been done about the company, and to create a personal touch to the resume.

There is specific information necessary for a cover letter and a specific format. This lesson plan will teach participants the information and format when they create their own cover letters.

BODY

1. Cover letters are often called letters of inquiry.
2. Stress to participants the purpose of a cover letter. The purpose of a cover letter is to get an interview. So the cover letter must achieve a number of things in a minimum amount of space. The cover letter must:
 - a. Introduce you to employers
 - b. Arouse their interest
 - c. Persuade the potential employer that you are the person to interview. Continually ask yourself the question – Why am I the most qualified person for this job?
3. As a class, review the different parts of a cover letter.
 - a. Addresses
 - b. Introduction Paragraph
 - c. Body Paragraph

d. Closing Paragraph

4. Provide the participants each with the *Components of a Cover Letter* Information Sheet 1.1.4.F1 and the grading rubric to assist them when writing their own cover letter.
5. Have the participants write a cover letter to include with the resume for the job they are applying for.

CONCLUSION

Remind the participants to turn in the grading rubric when they turn in their cover letter so you do not have to make multiple copies.

ASSESSMENT

Participant's cover letters will be assessed based upon the *Cover Letter Grading Rubric* 1.1.4.B1.

MATERIALS

Cover Letters Grading rubric – 1.1.4.B1
Sample Cover Letter overhead – 1.1.4.D1
Cover Letters Information Sheet – 1.1.4.F1

COVER LETTERS GRADING RUBRIC

Name: _____

Date: _____

	Exemplary – 3	Satisfactory – 2	Unsatisfactory – 1	Rating	Weight	Score
Opening Paragraph	The opening paragraph arouses the interest of the employer by stating why you are interested in the organization, names the specific job applied for and states where you heard of the job.	The opening paragraph is poorly written or is missing one of the required elements: why you are interested, specific job, where you heard of the job.	The opening paragraph is poorly written and is missing more than one of the required elements.		3	
Middle Paragraph	The middle paragraph is neatly written and creates a desire for an employer to know more about you. It emphasizes the resume pointing out achievements and qualifications that meet the job description.	The middle paragraph is poorly written and does not create a desire for the employer to know more about the applicant or does not emphasize the resume.	The middle paragraph is poorly written and does not make the employer want to meet the individual, emphasize the resume and does not refer to the job description.		3	
Closing Paragraph	The closing paragraph paves the way for an interview by offering to call in the future.	The closing paragraph leaves the employer unsure if the applicant would like an interview or does not offer to call in the future.	There is no closing paragraph.		3	
Layout	The letter is organized. It includes all of the required components in the correct order with the correct spacing between elements.	The letter is missing 1 of the required elements or the components are not in the correct order.	There is no apparent organization to the letter. It is missing multiple components.		3	
Writing Skills	Sentences are fluent and effective. Very few errors in mechanics, punctuation, and word usage.	Sentences are usually controlled. There are minor errors in mechanics, punctuation, and word usage.	Sentences are generally adequate. There are lapses in mechanics, punctuation, and grammar.		3	

Format	Letter meets 100% of the formatting requirements.	Letter does not include one of the formatting requirements.	The letter is missing more than one of the formatting requirements.		3	
				Total Points Earned		
				Total Points Available		54
				Percentage		

Formatting Requirements-

- One page in length
- One inch margins
- Printed on white or off white bond paper
- 10-12 font size
- Easy to read font
- Letter is signed
- Letter addresses a specific person within the organization.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

235 E. Pacific Street, Apt. 2B
San Francisco, CA 94115

May 13, 2002

Dr. Daniel Carter
Dean, General Studies Program
University of San Francisco
125 Haight Street, Room 222
San Francisco, CA 94113

Dear Dr. Carter:

Dr. Joan Hoskins mentioned you are currently seeking a Student Services Coordinator and suggested that I contact you. The position sounds particularly attractive to me since it encompasses my two major interests and strengths, academic advisement and career counseling. Having recently completed my M.A. in Counseling at San Francisco State I am available for employment immediately.

While a graduate student at San Francisco State, I served as a career and academic advisor for the Bay Area Summer Enrichment Program (BASEP) which was recently cited by the California legislature for its contributions to the state. At BASEP, I worked extensively with a varied clientele, including physically challenged, international, and economically disadvantaged students. My major responsibilities included planning academic programs and conducting career related workshops on topics such as resume writing and job hunting. In addition, I played a pivotal role in the development of an innovative mentor program which paired corporate executives with academically at risk students.

I am confident that the combination of my training and experience will enable me to make a valuable contribution to your university, and to assist your student in preparing for their future. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and share more about my background.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dana Warren

Enclosure