

- A cover letter introduces you to potential employers and demonstrates how your strengths and background match their job description.
- A cover letter allows you the opportunity to let the employer know why you are applying to the position. Be sure to demonstrate your excitement for the position to which you are applying.
- You will need to tailor your cover letter for each position to which you apply.
- Your cover letter should be focused on the needs of the employer, not your own, and should always accompany a résumé.

Getting Started

1. Do NOT use any kind of a template. This way you can fully control the formatting, and your cover letter will be more likely to pass through Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) used by many employers to screen professional documents used for hiring.
 2. Begin with a blank document set to single line spacing and 0 pts before and after paragraphs.
 3. Do not use any graphics or tables to ensure your cover letter passes ATS systems.
 4. Set margins to between .5" and 1" for the entire document. Use the same size margin as your résumé.
 5. Go no longer than one page.
 6. Do not use acronyms.
 - a. SUNY = State University of New York
 7. We suggest you do not use AI. Use your own words for an authentic letter in your own voice.
 8. See a sample cover letter on the next page for reference.
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Sections of the Cover Letter

1. YOUR ADDRESS

Keep your contact information formatted the same as your résumé's contact information.

2. EMPLOYER ADDRESS

Employer Name and Address

Re: Job Title

3. GREETING

Dear _____,

Hiring Manager

Hiring Team

Individual's name

4. FIRST PARAGRAPH

Why them?

Use the first sentence to let the employer know what you are applying for and how you found the position. If someone referred you, start the cover letter with the person's name (Example: Barb Smith recommended I apply for...). Highlight why you are applying to this organization, and specifically why you are interested in the organization.

5. BODY PARAGRAPH

Why you?

Here is your chance to expand on your qualifications with concrete examples demonstrating your skills and experience. Use the job description (if you have one) to guide you in mapping your experience to the organization's needs in this paragraph. Incorporate industry language and verbs from the job description.

6. THIRD PARAGRAPH

Reiterate interest and your desire to speak further.

This can be a simple paragraph reiterating your interest in the position and thanking the employer for taking the time to read your cover letter. Be sure to indicate how or when the employer can reach you. You may want to include that you will follow up within a week to ensure they received your application and/or answer any questions. Following up is a great way to show your enthusiasm for the position.

7. CLOSING

Sincerely,

**Your signature here*

Your Name

NOTE: *Creating cover letters takes time and you will go through many versions and revisions. Plan to have your cover letter(s) reviewed by a career counselor, professor, employer or others in your field. Always spell check before sending it out! Small grammatical mistakes may result in an employer rejecting you for an interview.*

Helpful Hints:

- *Avoid overusing "I"*
- *Tailor to employers needs*
- *Use keywords from job description*
- *Spelling/Grammar error free*
- *Avoid the word 'passion'*
- *Address the letter to a specific person. If you're unsure who, contact the company directly*
- *Follow up in a week if no response, confirm receipt of resume and application, share continued interest in the position.*

EXAMPLE COVER LETTERS

Charles Wantajob

44 Pierrepont, Potsdam, NY, 13676

studentemail@potsdam.edu

(315)555-1234

Electric Lady Sound Studios

1633 Broadway, New York, NY

February 10, 2025

Re: Internship Position

Dear Hiring Committee,

As a Music Business major at the Crane School of Music, I am extremely interested in an internship position at Electric Lady Sound Studios. I gravitate to the climate of Electric Lady because of its visible warmth in the creative process of music development and its legendary history. I am a huge fan of the era that birthed the studio and the inspiring musicians that recorded in it, including the founder Jimi Hendrix himself. I discovered the position through resources from the Crane Institute for Music Business and my personal familiarity with the famous reputation of the studio itself. I bring a variety of skills that I believe will be beneficial to the recording studio, as I can interweave my knowledge of both the creative and business perspectives of the music industry.

As a creator myself, having written songs since childhood, I understand and embody the artistic perspective. My goals include honing my production skills in the area of bringing art to life, and Electric Lady Studios seems to offer invaluable knowledge to help me accomplish that. My educational experience has amplified my skillsets where I had the opportunity to engineer and produce a recording portfolio through the school's high-tech recording studio. I have also Co-Produced my own band's first three EPs, developing my technical skills through my love of my own music. As my résumé details, my skills include proficiency in Pro Tools, FL Studio, and other digital audio workstations, as well as various media and administrative qualities. Applying my education in a practical setting as remarkable as Electric Lady would be an opportunity to become a more comprehensive artist. If given the opportunity, I will dedicate my skills to assist the studio in any way I can.

I am a musician and artist who enjoys all forms of inspiration and creative outlets. I love the inner components of music production and process of bringing art to life. Trained in the business climate, I believe I offer a unique perspective of multiple dimensions of the industry. It would be a great opportunity to intern at Electric Lady Sound Studios, which I believe is a home for artists and fulfills Hendrix's dream of a universal language of music. I appreciate your consideration of my candidacy and artistic expression. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Charles Wantajob

Charles Wantajob

Potsdam Student

(123) 456-7890 | StudentP@potdam.edu

Career Services
Lougheed Center for Applied Learning
SUNY Potsdam
44 Pierrepoint Street
Potsdam NY, 13676
Re: Graduate Assistantship

Dear Hiring Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I am applying for the Graduate Assistantship opportunity that Career Services is offering at SUNY Potsdam. When the job alert email was sent out to graduate students here on campus, I was eager to apply. The Lougheed Center for Applied Learning has an impressive reputation on campus, and I believe my skillset would be a contributing asset to your programming. I would welcome the opportunity to participate in an all-encompassing learning environment that benefits our students to such a high degree.

To assist students in a holistic way, I believe my experience as an English and communication graduate student can be applied to support students' writing development. My graduate research exposed me to an array of ethnographic literature that I am critically analyzing for my thesis. I have been immersed with conducting research and applying methods that capture community development and culture shifts. My extensive writing experience can ensure quality and detailed résumé and cover letter critiques.

In assisting with cover letters and résumés, I can employ organizational techniques that I acquired as a patient registration clerk at St. Lawrence Health Systems. There was a myriad of information that I was responsible for both curating and safeguarding daily. This can be viewed as a boon for both the protection of student information and for the curation of résumé writing techniques and best practices.

I truly believe that working together with students on documents that reflect them and their accomplishments it will positively breed their creativity and foster their overall career development. In closing, my holistic way of thinking and approaching problems will support the offices' mission of positive career outlooks. As a dedicated member of your team, I will ensure to apply my skills in an altruistic manner. Thank you for your time in reviewing my application. I look forward to the opportunity for an interview with you, to discuss my candidacy.

Sincerely,
Potsdam Student
Potsdam Student

COVER LETTER WRITING PREPARATION

1. Locate a job opening and use the description to guide you.
 - a. Refer to Handshake, LinkedIn, local employment advertisements, and onetonline.org for job listings.
 2. List key words and phrases you find in the job description that you would like to include in your cover letter.
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3. Why do you want to apply for this job at this organization?

4. Why are you the right candidate for the role?

5. Following the examples a guide above craft your letter using your own words.
6. **Edit** the letter to ensure it is free of spelling and grammatical errors.
7. Have someone else read it and provide **feedback**.
8. Save it as a **pdf** so it is ready to upload to online applications or print it for paper applications.
9. Remember, you should craft a **customized cover letter** for each job.

Complete this checklist after you write your cover letter. It should contain the following:

- Your address – matching the formatting of your résumé contact information
- Employer name and address
- Greeting using hiring manager name if possible
- Introduction paragraph – Why them?
 - Incorporate key words from job description
- Body paragraph – Why you?
 - Continue to incorporate key words from job description
- Closing paragraph – Reiterate interest in role.
- Closing – include a signature between your closing and your name



Book a 1:1 appointment with Career Services Staff on Starfish using this QR code!

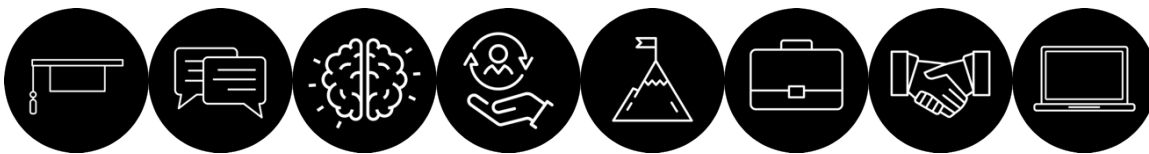
Let us know what you thought of today's presentation! Scan this QR and share your thoughts with us.

CAREER SERVICES | LOUGHEED CENTER FOR APPLIED LEARNING | LOUGHEED LEARNING COMMONS, 107
appliedlearning@potdam.edu



National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Career Readiness Competencies for Employment



Part time jobs, classes, extracurriculars and participation in special events and programs will all help you improve these important transferable skills, which account for up to 50% of job responsibilities in any field. Be sure to articulate how you do these things well on your résumé!

Career & Self Development

To grow individually and in your career, keep learning new things, understand your strengths and weaknesses, look for new job opportunities, and build relationships with people both inside and outside of your field.

Communication

Exchange ideas, information, facts, and perspectives as clearly and effectively as you can when working with peers/mentors.

Critical Thinking

Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

Equity & Inclusion

Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different cultures and backgrounds. Engage in anti-oppressive practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism and inequity.

Leadership

Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

Professionalism

Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

Teamwork

Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

Technology

Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.