

Cover Letter Writing

**George Mason University
University Career Services**

<http://careers.gmu.edu>

SUB I 348, 703-993-2370

SOM Career Services

<http://som.gmu.edu/career>

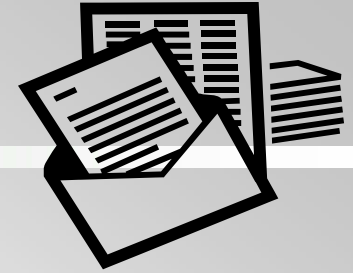
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Workshop Overview

- **Purpose of a Cover Letter**
- **Contents of Cover Letters and Cover Letter Tips**
- **Cover Letter Writing Activities**
- **Resources**
- **Next Steps**

What is a Cover Letter?



- A business letter that accompanies a resume.
- Informs reader of your purpose and requests an in-person meeting.
- Highlights and directs attention to important information in the resume.
- Intended to convince reader that it is worthwhile to meet you.
- May take the form of an email message or a brief note that accompanies an electronic application

Before you write a cover letter,

RESEARCH the
company

RESEARCH the
position

RESEARCH!!!



An Effective Cover Letter

- **Introduces You; Your Resume**
- **Summarizes Pertinent Aspects of your Education or Experience**
- **States briefly how your Qualifications relate to the Job**
- **Indicates if you have included a Resume, Writing Sample, Transcript, or other documents**
- **Is Brief and to the Point**
- **Requests an Interview**

Cover Letter Contents (3 or 4 paragraphs)

Paragraph 1: Why you are writing? Mention referral source in the first sentence.

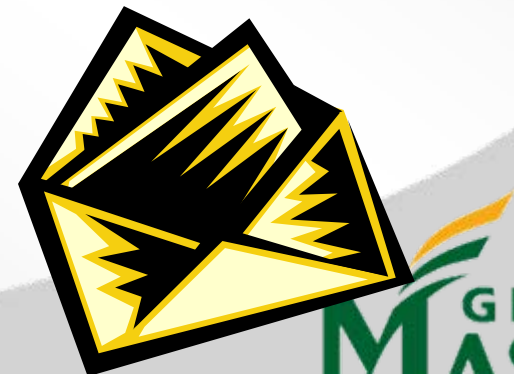
Paragraph 2: Why should they consider you? This "hooks" the reader.

Paragraph 3: Why do you want to work for them? What attracts you to the organization? How does the organization/job match up with your values and qualifications.

Paragraph 4: The close. Be assertive. "I would like to meet with you to discuss..."

Cover Letter Tips

- **Personalize letters**
- **Target a specific job or employer**
- **Be positive, natural, direct and interesting**
- **Avoid being repetitious of resume**
- **Be brief (concise)**
- **PROOFREAD**



Next Steps and Resources

Have your letter reviewed by a career counselor

Review cover letter samples

Websites

- <http://careers.gmu.edu/students/jobhunt/letters.html>
- <http://som.gmu.edu/preparejobsearch>
- www.quintcareers.com/cover_letter_tutorial.html
- www.rileyguide.com/letters.html

Any Questions?