COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN ECOLOGY COVER LETTER GUIDE

Subhead here

Table of Contents

Cover Letter Tip

Details Matter. Address the cover letter to an individual for a personalized touch. If the job posting does not list a contact, research the company's website or LinkedIn profile to find the hiring manager.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

EHE Career Services

1787 Neil Avenue

201 Campbell Hall

Columbus, Ohio 43201

Phone: 614-688-5663

http://ehe.osu.edu/career-services/

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is an opportunity to explain **why** you would be the **best candidate** for a position. When writing your cover letter consider how your experiences and interests relate to the opportunity.

Make sure to include all requested information such as job reference number, employment availability, salary requirements, etc. within your letter.

Incorporating transferrable competencies such as communication, teamwork, and decision making skills offers employers a perspective on your experiences and talents. Below is a list of core competencies to use when writing your cover letter.

Make sure your cover letter is accurate and up-to-date with your current contact information and experiences. When printing off your cover letter use white, cream, ivory, or light grey paper. Remember to remove the hyperlink from your email address, and convert your letter either to a .pdf, .jpg, or .png file so when an employer downloads your cover letter the formatting is consistent.

Transferable Core Competencies

Core Competencies are skills you have gained through jobs, volunteer experiences, and extracurricular activities which can be useful for future employment opportunities.

•**Communication:** The ability to write, speak, and listen well to others.

• **Teamwork/Collaboration:** The ability to work together to meet a common goal..

•**Leadership:** The ability to recognize, understand, and define problems and choose between different options to implement change.
.

•**Analytical Skills:** The ability to evaluate and understand options and the effects of decisions.

•**Initiative:** The ability to develop a new idea or method and do it before others do.

•**Technical Knowledge:** The ability to possess technical knowledge of a job/field and the capability to learn a new technology quickly and accurately.

•**Organization:** The ability to effectively plan the work of a group and to provide structure sot that it is systematic.

•**Influence:** The ability to motivate, convince, or persuade a group to do something.

•**Cultural Competence:** The ability to stand back from yourself and become aware of other cultural values, beliefs, and perceptions and how they are relevant to global issues.

Cover Letter Critique Checklist — College of Education & Human Ecology - Career Services

	Content	Formatting

| Opening | □ **Identify the position** to which you are applying for and state how you learned about the opening.
□ **Provide brief information** on any qualifications, skills, education, etc. you possess that are relevant to show your interest in the position.
□ **Ensure wording is creative** and catches an employer's attention quickly
□ **Indicate why** you are interested in the position | |

| The Body | □ **Indicate why you would be a good candidate for the job** by providing concrete examples of your abilities, skills, accomplishments, etc. as evidence of how your qualifications match the job.
□ **Include your educational history** and any other training you have that is applicable to the position.
□ **Use strong action verbs** to highlight tasks you can do, responsibilities, and accomplishments.
□ **Expand on your accomplishment statements/job duties** to include the 5 w's: who, what, when, where, and why. Whenever possible, try to quantify information by adding numbers, percentages, etc. as this is a great way to provide that extra bit of detail to employers. | ✓**Make sure to include all requested information**: job reference number, employment availability dates(s), salary requirements, etc.
□ **Tailor the letter to the reader** to reflect your knowledge of the organization and industry, and your interest in the job. |

Core Competencies

Are these transferable core competencies reflected in your document? Check all that apply.	Where did you develop these skills? (Work Experience, Internship, Co-curricular Involvement, Volunteer, Study Abroad, Classroom Projects, etc.)	Give specific examples of this skill/quality.	How would you write this on your cover letter?
□ **Communication:** The ability to write, speak, and listen well to others.			
□ **Teamwork/Collaboration:** The ability to work together and effectively use the strengths of each individual to meet a common goal.			
□ **Decision Making (Leadership):** The ability to recognize, understand, and define problems and effectively choose between different options to implement change.			
□ **Problem Solving/Analytical Skills:** The ability to evaluate and understand options and the effects of decisions.			
□ **Innovation and Creativity/Initiative:** The ability to develop a new idea or method and do it before others do.			
□ **Technical Knowledge:** The ability to possess technical knowledge of a job/field and the capability to learn new technology quickly and accurately.			
□ **Organization:** The ability to effectively plan the work of a group and to provide structure so that it is systematic.			
□ **Influence:** The ability to motivate, convince, or persuade a group to do something.			
□ **Global Issues/Cultural Competence:** The ability to stand back from yourself and become aware of other cultural values, beliefs, and perceptions and how they are relevant to global issues.			

Try to incorporate these skills into your cover letter as it relates to the job duties of which you are applying. Regardless of your major or work experience, these are skills that employers are looking for in a new hire.

| Closing | □ **Confidently request an interview and state your intentions to contact him/her in a certain timeframe to follow up.** This will end your letter with a direct call to action.
□ **Refer to your enclosed resume** without copying it verbatim; your goal is to entice the reader to review your resume!
□ **Provide information as to how you can be most readily be contacted:** cell phone \| email address
□ **Thank the recipient** for their time in considering you for the position.
□ **Ending salutation:** include a professional closing, such as "sincerely."
□ **Include the word "Enclosure(s)"** on the line beneath your typed name to indicate an attached resume or other supporting documents. | □ **Skip 3 lines** between your salutation and your typed name; if you print the letter, sign it in this space. |

| Formatting | □ **Font type/size and margin width** should be the same as your resume and references.
□ **Utilize the same heading as is on your resume.** This will provide a clean, consistent look across your documents.
□ **Use standard business letter format when creating your cover letter.**
 Your document is **missing** the following: □ date □ recipient's name □ recipient's title □ address of the organization
□ **Address the letter to a person.** If the recipient's name is not on the job posting, research and find the name of the person most likely to receive the information. Check for spelling of the person's name, correct prefix and exact title.
□ **Cover letter is too generic.** Do not use a generic letter for every job you apply to; make sure your cover letter is personalized to each and every position and organization.
□ **Spell out acronyms** to keep your resume looking formal. (ex: Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU))
□ **Reduce or expand** to produce a *concise* document that sells you best. (Length depends on quality and quantity of experiences and accomplishments)
□ **Omit information that could cause someone to discriminate against you.** (ex: pictures, religious/political affiliations, marital status, etc.)
□ **Spelling and grammatical errors** are present. Professional documents can be discarded for just one mistake, make yours error free!
□ **Vary sentence structure;** avoid starting many sentences with "I" or "My" and include both simple and complex sentences to keep your reader engaged. | |

**Adapted from Stephen F. Austin State University-Career Services

Cover Letter Example

FIRST, LAST NAME
Email ● Cell Phone ● Street Address ● City ● State ● Zip Code

Month, Day, Year
Mr./Ms./Dr. First & Last Name
Title
Name of Company/Organization
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Hiring Manager or Mr. /Ms. /Dr.,

First Paragraph: Introduce yourself to the employer. Make sure to include why you are the best candidate for the opportunity, the position for which you are submitting your application, and how you learned about the position. Briefly describe your most significant qualifications related to the opportunity, as well as why you are interested in working for the company or organization.

Second Paragraph: Discuss in detail why you are the best candidate for the position by highlighting your skills and experiences. Tailor your cover letter for a specific job. Make sure to include two to three specific examples of either your qualifications or experiences that relate to the position without simply reiterating the information on your resume. Describe how your skills and experiences relate to the desired qualifications listed in the position description. The second paragraph should answer the question: "Why should you hire me?"

Third Paragraph: Emphasize why you are a strong candidate for the position, along with highlighting your interest in joining their company or organization. Thank the reader for their time in considering your application, along with your interest in proceeding in the interview process. Explain to the employer how to contact you by including both your phone number and email address. End your cover letter by using "Sincerely" as your closing line. Insert your signature to personalize your cover letter. Make sure to proofread for typos, spelling errors, and grammatical errors.

Sincerely,

Personal Signature

Your Name Typed