

The background is white with various abstract shapes and dots. There are teal, orange, and black shapes scattered around the text. Some shapes are solid, while others have thin black outlines. The dots are small black circles of varying sizes.

Cover Letter Tips and Tricks

A crash course in cover letter writing

Crafting your Approach

Review the Organization

Familiarize yourself with the organization's work and tailor your cover letter to their stated values

Make it Personal

Tell your story! Show them who you are and let your personality and experiences shine through

Put Yourself in Their Shoes

Review your letter from an outsider's perspective. Pretend you don't know who wrote the letter; what does it tell you about the author?

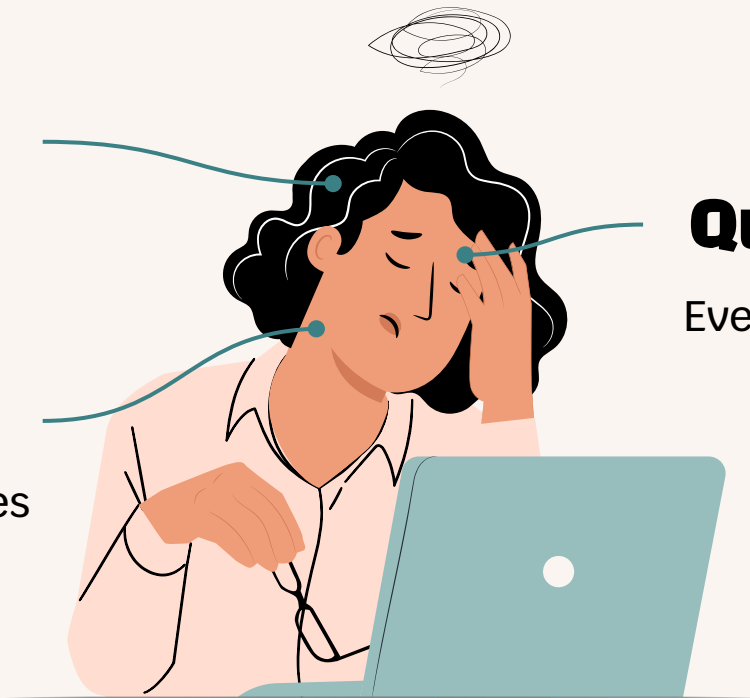
Having Trouble Writing?

- **Proofread**

Read your essay aloud to yourself!

Ask for Help

Get a second pair of eyes to review your work.



Quality > Quantity

Every word counts. Clarity over “fancy” writing. Eliminate anything unnecessary.

Dos and Don'ts

Do

Personable and Professional

Address the Hiring Manager

Mention Mutual Connections

Tailor your Letter to each Job

Stay Focused

Don't

Sound robotic

Talk in 3rd Person

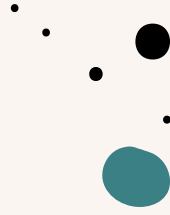
Run-On Sentences

Abbreviations

Write more than 1 page



Questions to Keep in Mind



Who are You?

**What Sets You
Apart?**

**What are Your
Goals?**

**How will you
Benefit the
Team?**





Reduce Adverb Usage

The boy threw the snowball at his sister very hard.

VS.

The boy pelted his sister with the snowball.

Eliminate “There is” Construction

There is a library called the PCL where stressed students may get some time to study.

VS.

Stressed students may get some study time at the PCL.

Beware of “That”

This is the cat that pounced on the mouse.

VS.

This cat pounced on the mouse.

Journalism Tips

The Perfect Cover Letter. Cover letters should be one page long, about 5-6 grafs.

Dear _____,

[Graf 1: SCENE. Tell a story. Recreate a moment you experienced in your previous job, something from your past that set the course for your work now, etc. etc. etc. But make sure it's as concrete as possible.]

[Graf 2: NUT GRAF. Extract the theme of your story. This should lead your reader into the next graf, which explains what you have to offer the news organization.]

[Graf 3: SUMMARY. This one's about you — who you are, what you're applying for, what you have to offer. But be sure that you don't restate your resume. And don't overstate your qualifications, experience, etc. or oversimplify. Be specific and get to the details.]


[Graf 4: THE JOB. This one's about your potential employer. Speak directly to the job you're applying to. Don't be afraid to include details of the news organization/market in which they work — but only if you actually know something about it. Editors know when you're faking it.]

[Graf 5: THE LOOSE ENDS. This one gets all the other, more official stuff out of the way. And it should be brief. Very brief. This is where you mention that you appreciate the reader's time, and conclude the letter]



Journalism

- Professional
- Show that you read the publication. Even better? Show why they stand apart from other outlets
- Design?
- How does prior experience make you the best candidate for this new one
- Be unique!



“You fail only if you stop writing.”

—**Ray Bradbury**





The University of Texas at Austin
Writing Support Program
Moody College of Communication

Come see us in the DMC 3.322!

12pm-6 pm Monday

10am-7pm Tuesday-Thursday

10 am-1 pm Friday

