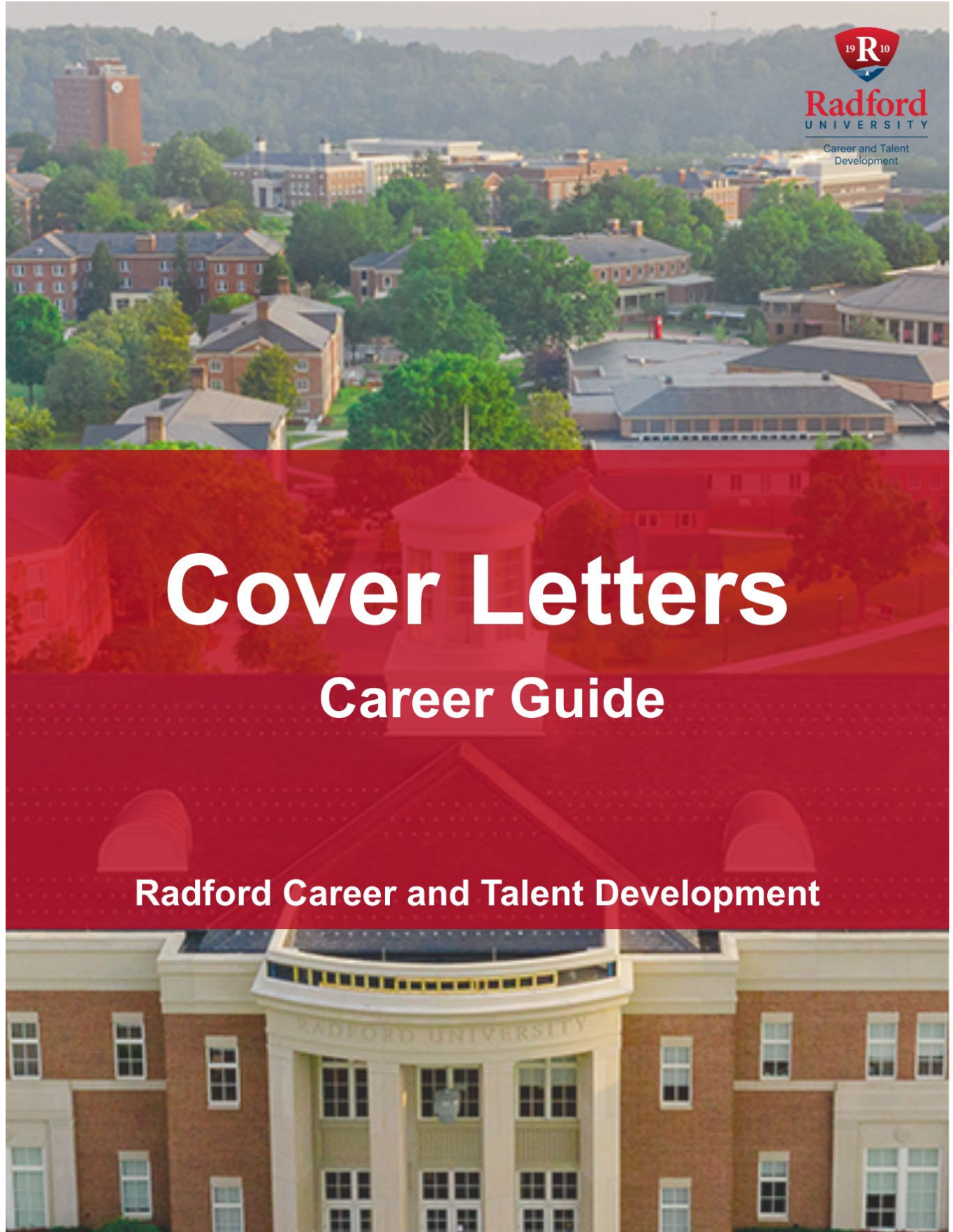




Radford
UNIVERSITY

Career and Talent
Development

Cover Letters

Career Guide

Radford Career and Talent Development

Cover Letter

Overview:

The goal of a cover letter is to use one page to expand on your experience and elaborate on your strengths beyond what is listed in your resume. Even if a cover letter is not required for a job, you should take the opportunity to explain why you should be hired.

It is important that when you write a cover letter you not only show that you have the necessary skills or experience to do the job, but also that you have done research beyond looking at the job description and have a specific interest in this position. This may require looking at the organization's website, reaching out to connections to gain information, or taking time to understand the role. When possible, you should tie specific phrasing or skills from the job description or the organization's mission into the cover letter. A good cover letter catches the reader's interest, demonstrates your investment in securing the role, and answers any questions they may have after looking at your resume.

After finishing your cover letter, you should proofread and ensure an error-free document. Furthermore, when naming a cover letter file include your last name, the place you are applying, and the words "cover letter"; using this naming convention will not only ensure a professional presentation of the document but also avoid confusion when submitting multiple applications. One option for reviewing your cover letter is to set up an appointment with the center for Career and Talent Development!

Parts of a cover letter:

Header: Follow proper letter format as illustrated in the example.

Address and greeting: Determine the name of the hiring manager. Search the company website.

Paragraph 1: A short, written "elevator pitch" that shows your strengths. This should include highlights of your strengths or experience. Identify the position and the company.

Paragraph 2: Focus on your most significant strength or connection to the role. Share how your experience makes you qualified and directly tie in the job description.

Paragraph 3: Highlight other significant experiences or strengths. This may be your opportunity to reframe a role on your resume and explain how it connects to the position. Conclude by summarizing and reiterate interest in position.

Closing and Sign off: Polite expression of continued interest and your name

Cover Letter Example:

Your Name
Your address
Phone Number | Email
Date

Hiring Manager's Name
Hiring Manager Title
Company Name
Company Address

Dear [Hiring Manager's Name],

I enjoyed speaking with you at the Radford University Career and Internship Fair and appreciated learning more about [organization name]. I am currently completing my Bachelor of Arts in History with a minor in Education (May 2025) and have a strong foundation in museum curation, community education, and curriculum design. Because of my experience in both youth education and my coursework in museum studies, I would be an asset to [organization name] as the [title].

Throughout my history degree, I have not only developed a robust understanding of the far-reaching implications of major historic developments on Appalachian communities but have also had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in a museum setting through my internship with [museum name]. As an intern, I spent two semesters working under [title] to research and design materials that supplemented the museum's in-person exhibits for dispersal in classroom settings, on the website, and as handouts. This not only allowed me to gain experience in exhibit planning and research but also helped me better understand how to adjust information for an audience, divide material into comprehensible sections, and format learning materials to be accessible for all learners.

In addition to my direct museum experience, I have also gained experience in student instruction through my role as an in-classroom tutor for [organization]. Through this role, I have gained experience in interpersonal communication, classroom management, and student engagement. By helping students grasp difficult concepts and develop a better understanding of historic timelines I have learned how to make education relevant to individuals and how to work with young people interested in history. This will serve me well in the role of [title] because it will allow me to effectively contribute to the museum's student groups and engage in development of museum curricula in a focused, community-oriented way.

Overall, I would be an effective [title] at [organization] because of my robust understanding of the importance of history education, experience in curriculum development, and passion for hands-on education. I appreciate your consideration and would welcome the opportunity to discuss my qualifications in an interview.

Sincerely,
Your Name

Submitting multiple cover letters:

If you're applying to multiple jobs, writing a unique cover letter for each position can feel overwhelming. You may often hear the advice to “avoid using a template.” However, this doesn’t mean you need to start from scratch every time. One helpful strategy is to think of your cover letter in terms of interchangeable building blocks. Consider drafting two to three versions of each paragraph based on the types of roles you're targeting, then mix and match them to best suit each specific opportunity.

For example, in the sample on the previous page, the applicant was targeting a role that required both historical knowledge and experience with one-on-one instruction. However, if the job instead emphasized historical knowledge and public speaking skills, the applicant might use this version of the 3rd paragraph:

In addition to my direct museum experience, I have also developed strong public speaking skills through my role as a classroom tutor for [organization]. A significant part of this position involved designing and delivering lessons to groups of ten to twenty students. This required not only effective oral communication but also the ability to adapt in real time to audience questions and levels of understanding. These presentation and classroom management skills will serve me well in the role of [title], enabling me to present material to student and tour groups in an engaging and interactive way.

Once you’ve created an outline using your selected paragraphs, you can personalize the letter by updating the position title and organization name, adjusting the language to reflect the job description, and incorporating insights from your research on the organization.

Sentence Templates:

Intro sentences:

- As a motivated student passionate about [Field or Interest], I was drawn to [Company Name]’s commitment to [Value, Initiative, or Project], and I’m enthusiastic about the opportunity to grow professionally while supporting your team.
- With academic training in [Relevant Field or Skill] and hands-on experience through [Internship, Project, or Campus Involvement], I am writing to apply to [Company Name]’s work in [Relevant Area or Mission].
- I am a [Year in School] at [University Name] majoring in [Your Major], and I am excited to apply for the [Job Title or Internship] position at [Company Name], as advertised on [Source].

Transition Sentences:

- Beyond my academic background, I've also gained practical experience through [Internship, Job, or Volunteer Role], which has helped me apply [classroom concepts relevant to your field] in real-world settings.
- In addition to my professional experience, I've been actively involved in [Club, Organization, or Leadership Role], where I've further developed my [Skill or Quality].
- These experiences have shaped my interest in [Field or Industry] and align closely with [Company Name]'s commitment to [Value, Mission, or Initiative]

Concluding Sentences:

- Thank you for considering my application. I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss how my background and experience can contribute to [Company Name]'s goals.
- I am excited about the possibility of joining your team and contributing to [Company Name]. I look forward to the opportunity to speak with you further about how I can support your work.
- I appreciate your time and consideration, and I'm eager to bring my passion for [Field or Skill] to [Company Name] as I continue to grow professionally.