



# COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

Understanding format and customization strategies can increase your chances of being selected for an interview

## / UNDERSTANDING COVER LETTERS\*

- One-page formal letter, sometimes referred to as “letter of interest” (often optional but recommended)
- Typically 3 paragraphs
- Professional font (e.g., Cambria, Garamond, Georgia, Arial, Calibri) at 10–12 pt.
- Customize with keywords from job or internship description
- Save as PDF or recruiter’s preferred format

## / HEADING

- Use a consistent header and font across your resume and cover letter to enhance the visual appeal and professionalism of your application

## / FIRST PARAGRAPH: INTRODUCTION

- Answer *What do you like about the company/organization?*
- State specific interest in the position and organization
- Reference the organization’s mission, values, or achievements
- Authentically express what draws you to them
- Align your experience, skills, and enthusiasm to the role
- Compliment the company’s successes and what you authentically like most about them.

## / SECOND PARAGRAPH: STORYTELLING

- Answer *Why should they pick you?*
- Highlight the most relevant experience and skills
- Connect content from resume, don’t just repeat it
- Include degree, coursework, internships, jobs, and projects
- Demonstrate outcomes and skills (use NACE Career Competencies for reference)
- Outline for body paragraph for entry level could be:

## / THIRD PARAGRAPH: CLOSING STATEMENTS

- Reaffirm interest and summarize qualifications
- Invite an interview or conversation
- Thank the reader, close professionally (e.g., Sincerely, Respectfully), add your signed signature in cursive, and typed name below it

***\*Cover Letter example/outline on page 2***

# FIRSTNAME LASTNAME

Morgantown, WV | (304) 293 – 5703 | firstnamelastname@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/firstlastname (optional)

Date being sent

*Name of person sending document to (i.e., Hiring Manager)*

Their Job Title

Company

Company address

Dear Hiring Manager,

I have developed a strong interest in (*company name*) because (**include 2 reasons you are interested in them specifically**). This is important to me because (*include at least 1 deep/ semi-personal/ sincere reason why you are pursuing this position or wanting to work for this company*). I am passionate about (**include 1 meaningful value/mission/culture fit description**). Therefore, I am excited for the opportunity to apply for the (*Title here*) position.

As a student at West Virginia University, I have not only been inspired to pursue (*career type/job title*) as my professional career, but to work on obtaining the experience and skills necessary for success in this field. My (*include adjective about you, i.e. creative*) and (*adjective about you, i.e.. hard working*) attitude has allowed me varied (*job type*) experience with a range of (*people/businesses/individuals/organization/field of study*). Most notable is my (*include a unique story, something special, or defining experience*). **Include a story about your experience as it might relate to the position, keep it concise, intrigue them and use humor if appropriate and possible.** Through this, I was successful at (*specific result as it relates to them*).

The experience, education, dedication to (*insert industry*), and passion I bring will be a great asset to (*name of company*) and the clients you serve. I would be happy to meet with you at your earliest convenience to further discuss my qualifications. Please feel free to contact me by email at firstnamelastname@gmail.com or by phone at (304) 293 – 5703. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

***Firstname Lastname (signed in cursive)***

Your name here typed