# Build a Cover Letter

## PURPOSE

This activity will provide critical tools and strategies that will aid you in successfully drafting and or revising your cover letter. You will need a cover letter whenever you send a resume when applying for a job, even if it is not required. The purpose of the cover letter is draw interest back to the resume, and ultimately make a lasting impression with the hiring manager. The letter should demonstrate your writing skills, indicate how you will benefit the company, and ask for an interview. Tailor information specifically for each position you apply for to increase your employability options.

## ACTION

Begin drafting your cover letter. There are general guidelines for how to create an effective cover letter. Essential components of a cover letter include the following:

1. **Contact information**: should be formatted the same as your resume. Include your name, phone, email, city & state. It’s optional to include full mailing address, [LinkedIn](http://www.clark.edu/enroll/careers/LinkedinChecklist.pdf), web or portfolio URL.
2. **Salutation**: address the person identified as the recruiter on the job announcement. If no one has been identified, simply address your cover letter to the *Hiring Manager*.
3. **Opening**: identify and express interest in the position you are applying for. Introduce the research you’ve done on the company or make an appealing connection with the reader. Highlight the key skills and experience you offer.
4. **Body**: highlight your education, learning from classroom content, and skills/strengths you will bring to the job that parallel those needed to fill the position. Give examples of your skills and work experience—quantified results, accomplishments, and achievements—and how they will transfer to the job. Consider referring to the Professional Readiness Competencies section of Career Planning for more ideas.
5. **Closing:** wrap up by reemphasizing your interest in the position. Don’t forget to request an interview. List one phone number and include your email address. Use a standard complimentary closing, such as "Sincerely", leave three or four lines for your signature, and type your name.

## NEXT STEPS

This is just a quick start to gathering the most important elements of your cover letter. For more help, examples and tips for building your cover letter, visit the Career Services website section: [Develop Your Cover Letter & Resume](http://www.clark.edu/enroll/careers/job-search/index.php) or make an appointment with an [Employment Specialist](http://www.clark.edu/careerservices) to support you in developing job search strategies. To develop more job search strategies, continue on to a “*Deeper Dive*” Activity.

You are now one step further in MyPlan. At this point we encourage you to discuss your progress with a faculty or staff member at Clark College; such as an Academic or Faculty Advisor, Career Services staff, or an Instructor.

It may be useful to print out and refer to this completed activity before your meeting, or email it to the staff/faculty ahead of time.