

Targeting Your Cover Letter

Besides a strong resume, an impactful cover letter is the perfect way to get the hiring manager's attention. In writing it, you must [target](#) what you say to the organization or position that you're pursuing, ensuring that your skills and experiences match key language in the job description.

Directions:

1. Go to the [cover letter section](#) of the Student Employment Services website to learn the basics:
2. Use our [job search page](#), LinkedIn, Indeed, or another website to search for a job of interest. While reviewing the qualifications and duties, highlight notable keywords (e.g., specific skills, duties, software, contexts in which you're experienced). Here's an example taken from part of a job description with keywords and phrases highlighted in blue:

Preferred Qualifications:

- *Ability to **multitask** and employ **problem-solving skills**
- *Able to **communicate with diverse client population**
- ***Team player** with **positive attitude**
- ***Bilingual** or working **proficiency in Spanish**

3. Write your cover letter draft. Use the keywords you highlighted to target the job description.

*Example: "Student teaching at Riverside Elementary School in Grants Pass has helped me become comfortable **multitasking** and creatively **solving problems**. For instance, my colleague and I decided to co-teach classes with both native English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students. This allows me to **communicate with our students whose first language is Spanish** to periodically check their comprehension. Our **team teaching** dynamic has yielded markedly improved student engagement and test scores as well as praise from the school administration."*

Finally, complete the following steps:

- *Schedule an appointment for a cover letter review with Student Employment Services.*
- *Write a one-page reflection about what you learned or discussed in your appointment. What changes do you plan to make? What experiences do you plan to highlight? What misconceptions about cover letters did you have before your meeting?*
- *Based on feedback, revise your cover letter; if time, schedule another cover letter review.*