



# Intro to Cover Letter Writing Workshop

DiNitto Career Center



# Today's Session

## Session Structure

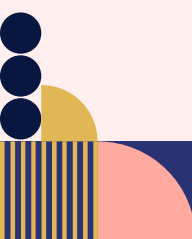

- Informational
- Feel free to ask questions via chat or coming off mute

## Topics

- What is a Cover Letter?
- Cover Letter formatting
- Cover Letter structure
- Tailoring your Cover Letter



# What is a Cover Letter?

- Document describing why you are interested in the role and what experiences/skills you have that would make you successful
  - Demonstrates your writing and communication ability
  - Showcase something that is not on your resume
  - Expand on something from your resume
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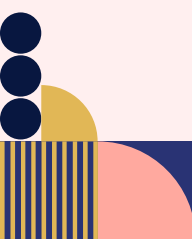



# Cover Letter vs Resume

## Cover Letter

- Paragraph/Story form
- Discuss why you are interested in the organization
- Discuss how your skills, experiences, and values align with the organization's

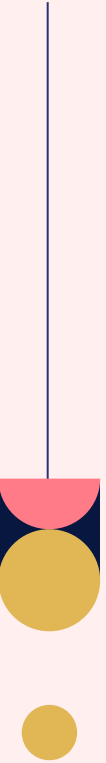

## Resume

- Concise
  - Outline or bullet point format
  - Your working history
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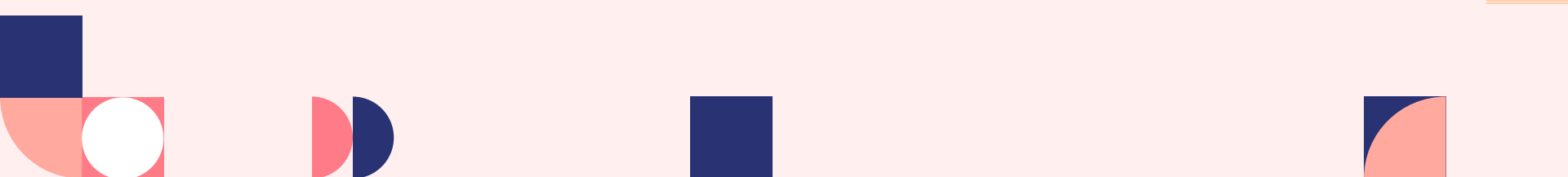
# Formatting



- Mirror formatting from your resume
  - Margins: No less than 1/2 inch
  - Single spaced
  - One page
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# Cover Letter Structure: Header

- Tip: Copy your resume header (name + contact information)
  - Date you are submitting application
  - Organization address – not needed
  - “Dear [Name of HR Rep]” or “Dear [Hiring Manager Name]” or “Dear Hiring Manager”
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# Cover Letter Structure: Opening Paragraph

- Research the organization before you start writing
- Your name
- Position Title
- Organization Name
- Why are you interested in this role?
  - Do you resonate with the organization's mission?
  - Are you passionate about the type of work being asked of the role?
- Name the unique skills/experiences that you bring to this role
  - Bonus: Treat this like your "thesis" sentence. Name skills/experiences you will expand on later in your cover letter.
- Can mention where you found the role

# Cover Letter Structure: Middle Paragraphs

- Typically 1-2 paragraphs
  - By working experience
  - By previous project/task
  - By skill
  - By job duty
- Depth not breadth
  - Depth: Showcase the degree of your experience
  - Breadth: Showcasing the multiple skills and abilities you have (your resume already does this)
- Be specific
  - Research the organization
  - Refer to the language used in the job description



# Cover Letter Structure: Middle Paragraphs

## How do I figure out what to write?

- Scan the job description. Highlight the skills, experiences, knowledge that are needed for the role.
- For each item you highlighted, match that item with one of your past experiences.
- Tell your story using STAR (situation, task, action, result.)

# Cover Letter Structure: Middle Paragraphs

Transferrable Skills – Don't be disheartened if you don't have direct experience in something they're looking for. Be creative with transferrable skills.


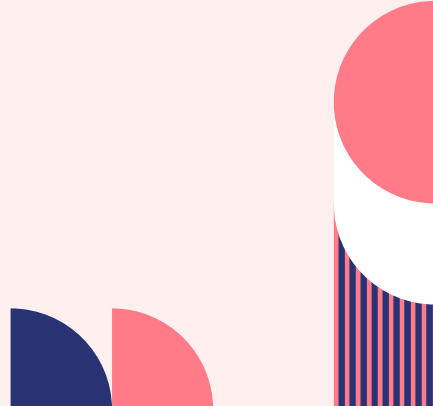
<b>Barista</b>	<b>Client Advocate</b>
Customer Service	Client Service
Mediation / Conflict Resolution	Supporting clients during times of crises or emergency
Organization	Maintaining files
Money Management	May not be relevant unless the role requires purchasing of supplies.
Time Management	Managing working with several clients at once while completing other job duties



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# Cover Letter Structure: Conclusion

- Reiterate your interests + what you have to offer
  - Thank them for reviewing your materials
  - Optional: Include salary requirements
  - If you included your contact information in your header, you don't need to include it again.
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# Tailor Your Cover Letter

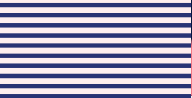



## Using the job description

- Highlight all tasks, responsibilities, knowledge areas this role needs to have
  - Most important or recurring tasks usually listed at the top
  - Some positions will provide a % breakdown
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# Tailor Your Cover Letter


## Research the Organization

- Website
    - Mission, values, history
    - Staff – who is supervising this role? Who works with this role?
    - Impact reports
  - Social media
  - Local News
  - LinkedIn
    - Do you know anyone who works at this organization?
    - What background do the staff have?
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# Cover Letter Writing in Practice

## Youth Resource Specialist - Youthworks

- Welcomes young individuals seeking assistance to the resource center
  - Conducts assessments to understand the specific needs of each young adult client
  - Provides or connects clients with resources and services including basic needs, medical, financial, and housing resources
  - Supports clients through the housing navigation process
  - Conducts or coordinates workshops to help youth develop essential life skills
  - Responds effectively to emergency situations
  - Maintains detailed records of files
  - Manages the phone line, responds to texts and phone calls
  - 1 year working with the unhoused population and/or 2 years working with youth communities
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Responsibility/Task

Knowledge Area

# Cover Letter Writing in Practice

## Client Service

- Welcoming clients to center
- Directing to resources
- Navigating resources/services
- Conduct assessments
- Managing phone line

## Workshops on life skills

## Filing

## Answering phone and text

## Responding to emergencies

## Questions to ask myself:

- What stands out as something that will be highly important/relevant to the role?
- What is something I have a lot of experience in?
- What is something that is a unique strength for me?
- What is something I have a strong story about?
- Is there a project/task I worked on that encompasses multiple of these skills?






# Cover Letter Writing in Practice


## Opening:

- I'm interested in the Youth Specialist Role at Lifeworks because [reason related to connection to mission, the type of work, or desire for professional development in this field.]
- I have experience in [experience 1] and [experience 2] that would make me successful in this role.

## Middle:

- Paragraph about experience/skill 1 and how it will make me successful in the role
  - Paragraph about experience/skill 2 and how it will make me successful in the role
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## Closing

- Recap your interests and strengths
  - Thank them for their time
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# Thanks!

Do you have any questions?  
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