

# UW Tacoma Cover Letter Tips and Template

- Use a heading similar to your resume to maintain a personal brand
- Complete company and recipient's information
- **Address your cover letter to a specific person.** Review the job description for specific person. If not listed, research who that is on LinkedIn or call the company to find out who the letter should be addressed to.
- Last resort, "Dear Hiring Manager" "Dear Search Committee of specific position"
- Avoid surnames such as Sir or Mrs.
- Use a colon ":", not a comma ",", afterwards

## First Name Last Name

Tacoma, WA | (253) 846-5309 | name@uw.edu

Month, Day, Year

First Name Last Name Title

Name of Organization Address

City, State, Zip code

Dear First Name Last Name,

**Opening Paragraph:** The first sentence of your cover letter should draw in the reader by connecting yourself to the job. State how you learned of the organization/position, and basic information about yourself (*your elevator pitch*) pertaining to the role of the job. If you learned about this position from a specific employee or referral, here is your time to include those names if relevant.

**2nd paragraph:** Mention specific qualifications from the job description and how you have demonstrated those shared skills in your past experiences and/or educational endeavors. Utilize the keywords from the job description itself. Experiences can be paid or unpaid. For example, pull from academic projects, research, coursework, internships, study abroad, employment, volunteer work, leadership roles, etc. You are trying to show how you are a strong candidate for this position. Take 2-4 experiences from your resume, but make sure to seize the opportunity to expand what you have already shared.

**3rd paragraph:** In 1-3 sentences state *why* you are interested in the company you are applying to. Take advantage of this letter to let the employer know what extra skills and abilities you are bringing to the table. Include transferrable skills you have acquired that would create a holistic profile for the employer. Keep in mind these skills don't have to be content matches, but they should still be abilities that you could put into use in this role. In addition to above and beyond skills, consider including professional accomplishments that will show the employer recognition of your abilities.

**4th paragraph:** Indicate that you would like the opportunity to interview for a position or to talk with the employer to learn more about their opportunities. State that you would be glad to provide the employer with any additional information needed. Thank the employer for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Handwritten signature* (It is not a requirement but a formality. If you have a way to insert a signature, do so.)

Your name typed

- **Don't** overuse "I" statements (ex. I am, I have, I did)
- **Do** keep it all on one page; not too long, not too short
- **Do** use a strong opening to pique employer's interest
- **Do** show your confidence, try not to be too passive
- **Do** customize your letter to every job you apply to
- **Do** ensure a polished appearance by making an appointment with Career Services:

<http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/career>

## What should I do if...

*I have a recruiter's name I am trying to include?*

- If you have a prior connection to an employee at the company, name drop in the first paragraph

*I don't have a lot of relevant experience for an internship?*

- When applying to an internship, employers are aware you might not have a lot of experience. Pull heavily from your academics in this scenario, and talk about what you will gain from this opportunity.