ATHENS TECHNICAL COLLEGE CAREER SERVICES PRESENTS

A STUDENT SUCCESS SEMINAR ON COVER LETTER WRITING
THE PURPOSE OF A COVER LETTER

• To convince the reader to look at your resume.
• To highlight your knowledge, skills and educational background.
• To assure the hiring manager that your personality will match the company culture.
• To provide additional information requested by the hiring agency.
A COVER LETTER SHOULD INCLUDE

• The job title and company for which you are applying.
• The knowledge you possess about the company and the job announcement.
• Your specific skill set, educational pedigree, and previous job history and how the correlate to the job for which you are applying.
• Your future plan of action, career goals, and how they align with the desired job.
THE JOB

• Within the first few sentences you should let the reader know which job you are applying for. A company may be hiring for several positions and you should indicate the one you are interested in.
• Refer to the position by the title that was used in the posting.
COMPANY INFORMATION

• It is impressive to a hiring representative if they know that you are familiar with their company.
• Show that you are by referring to the companies positive attributes.
• Note current awards, recognitions or achievements of the company as you highlight your own skills.
YOUR SKILLS & BACKGROUND

• Highlight your key strengths and abilities. You should be choosing what to highlight by knowing what skills the hiring company is looking for in the position. Provide examples of how you have proven these skills.
  - For example: If you are applying for a position in sales then the cover letter should highlight past sales experience, including any awards related to customer service, and sales experience.
  - For example: If you are applying for a job in accounting, include any skills related to accounting principles, fiscal management, finance, etc.

• Keep this to a paragraph or two.
YOUR PERSONALITY

- Your employment application needs to stand out from the pack. You can create a good impression with the employer in your resume by your experience, education, and history.
- Equally important, is that the hiring agency understands who you are as a person.
- Your writing style and use of language is a reflection of your personality.
- Use it to your advantage to express how your personality matches the company culture.
PLAN OF ACTION

• Always indicate a plan of action at the end of your cover letter.
• State what you want – an interview!
• Indicate what you will do next: call the company, email the hiring representative, etc.
COVER LETTER WRITING BASICS

The Format

• A cover letter should be one page, 12 pt. font, 1 inch margins.
• A cover letter should be in business format and include your name and contact information as a letterhead.
• Always proofread for grammar errors.
• You should always create a new cover letter for every job for which you apply.
COVER LETTER WRITING BASICS

• Address your letter to an individual whenever possible.
• Use appropriate language, no contractions or slang phrases.
• Avoid negativity, always focus on your positive traits and experiences.
• Always sign your letters (in black ink).
COVER LETTER DON’TS

• Send a resume without a cover letter
• Be overly wordy.
• Depend on the employer to make the next step.
• Send a letter with typos or grammar errors.
• Rehash your entire resume.