



Lesson Guide

Climbers learn about the importance of cover letters in the job application process and how to craft compelling cover letters that highlight their skills and experiences. By the end of the lesson, they have outlined a tailored cover letter for a specific job posting.

Learning Objectives	<p>Understand the purpose and key sections of a cover letter for job success.</p> <p>Write concise, impactful cover letters highlighting skills and enthusiasm.</p> <p>Practice tailoring cover letters for specific job applications.</p>
WIOA Program Elements	<p>E 13. Workforce Preparation Activities. Supports workforce preparation by helping learners develop essential written communication skills necessary for job applications.</p> <p>E 14. Education Offered Concurrently with Workforce Preparation. Integrates career education with practical application, ensuring that learners gain both knowledge and real-world job readiness skills.</p>
Key Concepts	<p>Cover Letter: A one-page document submitted with a resume that introduces the applicant, highlights their qualifications, and explains why they are a good fit for the job.</p> <p>Tailoring: Customizing a cover letter to match the specific job and company to which one is applying.</p>
Materials	<p>Coach Deck: Cover Letters to Land It</p> <p>Internet-ready devices with Hats & Ladders access</p> <p>Activity: Crafting Your Cover Letter</p> <p>Activity Guide: Crafting Your Cover Letter</p> <p>Template: Cover Letter</p> <p>Exemplar(s): Cover Letter</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Food Service Cover Letter Exemplar</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Medical Billing Cover Letter Exemplar</p> <p>Rubric: Crafting Your Cover Letter</p>

Coach Prep

1. Review lesson instructions and activity materials, including the **Coach Deck**, an optional resource you can use to guide Climbers through the lesson and digital Career Climb.
2. Arrange a computer lab or laptop cart, or instruct your group to bring their own devices with internet connectivity.
3. [Optional] From the Coach platform, assign the **Cover Letters to Land It** Career Climb to your group. This will allow you to track their progress from your dashboard.

Warm-Up

1. To introduce the concept of a cover letter, ask Climbers about situations in which they've introduced themselves to someone new. Suggested prompts:
 - Have you ever met someone for the first time or sent someone a text introducing yourself?
 - How did you decide what to include and what to leave out?
 - What did that feel like? What were you most excited to share?
2. Explain that a cover letter is similar to these introductions but is specifically for introducing yourself to a potential employer.
3. Highlight that a well-written cover letter can make a big difference in getting noticed by employers.
4. Briefly outline what will be covered in the lesson, including:
 - **Understanding the structure** – the key components of a cover letter and their purposes.
 - **Crafting compelling content** – engaging introductions, relevant skills and experiences, and strong conclusions.
 - **Tailoring and refining** – customizing your cover letter for specific job applications.

Guide a Career Climb

1. Explain that a cover letter is a crucial part of the job application process that goes beyond what's on your resume.
2. Direct Climbers to the Hats & Ladders platform to complete the **Cover Letters to Land It** Career Climb, which consists of four Ladders:
 - **Cover Letter Starter Kit** (4 mins.)
 - **What Should A Cover Letter Say?** (6 mins.)

- **How to Write a Cover Letter** (5 mins.)
 - **Practice Writing a Cover Letter** (8 mins.)
3. Climbers can complete the entire Career Climb **at once**, or they can **pause** to share out takeaways and questions along the way.
 4. Climbers can then apply what they learned by completing the activity.

Activity: Crafting Your Cover Letter

1. Have Climbers independently read through the instructions on the **activity handout**.
2. Climbers complete the activity. Encourage them to utilize the **guide, template, and exemplars**.
3. Facilitate a brief **pair-and-share reflection**. Suggested prompts:
 - *What was the most challenging part of writing your cover letter?*
 - *What skills and experiences did you highlight, and how do they align with the job requirements?*
4. Have a few Climbers share their reflections.

Wrap-Up

1. Emphasize that every cover letter should be tailored to the specific job posting.
2. Highlight the importance of **customizing** each cover letter to show that you have taken the time to understand the job requirements and the company's values.
3. Review key lesson concepts, including:
 - a. **Cover Letter:** A one-page document that introduces the applicant, highlights their qualifications, and explains why they are a good fit for the job.
 - b. **Tailoring:** Customizing a cover letter to match the specific job and company.
4. Encourage Climbers to **practice** writing cover letters for different job postings to improve their skills and increase their chances of landing a job.

Assessment

- To evaluate the **Climbers' understanding** of the lesson, use the provided **rubric** to score activity submissions on a scale of 1 to 4 for each criterion.

Modifications

- If you do not have access to devices, have Climbers complete the digital Career Climb at home.

Activity: Crafting Your Cover Letter

First, choose a job posting you have in mind. Then, fill in the key cover letter sections below to showcase your qualifications and achievements. Finally, use this content to fill out your full cover letter – and make sure to keep the [guide](#), [template](#), and [exemplars](#) handy!

Your Contact Information

Start by filling in your personal information.

<p>Your Name: Location (City, State): Phone Number: Email Address: LinkedIn Profile URL: Today's Date:</p>	<p>Write your full name as it appears on your official documents.</p> <p>Ensure your address, phone number, email, and LinkedIn URL are accurate and professional.</p> <p>Use today's date in the format: Month DD, YYYY.</p>
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Employer's Contact Information

Fill in the employer's information. You can find these details in the job posting or on the company's website. If you can't find every detail, that's okay! Fill in as much as you can.

<p>Employer's Name: Company Name: Company Address:</p>
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Salutation

Write a professional greeting.

<p>Dear _____, <i>Hiring manager's name</i></p>	<p>If you can't find the hiring manager's name, use "Dear Hiring Manager,".</p>
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Introduction

Write a brief introduction stating the job you are applying for and why you are interested.

<p>I am writing to express my interest in the</p>	<p>Clearly state the job title and where you found the job posting.</p>
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_____ position at _____
Job title *Company's name*

as advertised on _____.
Job board or company website

With my background in _____
Relevant field or industry

and my enthusiasm for _____,
Specific aspect of the job

I am confident that I can make a significant contribution to your team.

Mention your relevant background or experience that makes you a good fit for the job.

Express your enthusiasm for a specific aspect of the job or company.

Body

Connect your skills and experiences to the job requirements.

In my previous role as a _____,
Job title or related position

I developed strong _____,
Relevant skill(s)

by _____.
Specific example

This experience has prepared me to contribute to _____
Company's name

by _____.
How the skill applies to the job

Additionally, my _____
Another relevant skill

was instrumental in _____,
Another specific example

which aligns with your need for _____.
Job requirement

Think about your past experiences, including school projects, volunteer work, part-time jobs, and any courses you've taken.

Identify the skills you gained from these experiences. Explain how these skills relate to the job you are applying for. Use specific examples to illustrate your skills.

Highlight another relevant skill or achievement. Explain how this skill or achievement aligns with the job requirements. Use specific examples to support your points.

Alignment with Company Values

Explain why you are excited about the opportunity and how you align with the company's values.

<p>I am particularly drawn to this opportunity at _____ <i>Company's name</i></p>	<p>Research the company's mission and values.</p>
<p>because of your commitment to _____. <i>Specific value or mission</i></p>	<p>Explain how your personal values or experiences align with the company's mission.</p>
<p>I share this commitment, having _____, <i>Relevant experience or interest</i></p>	<p>Show enthusiasm for the opportunity and how you can contribute to the company.</p>
<p>and I am eager to bring my enthusiasm and skills to your team.</p>	

Conclusion

Write a strong closing statement that reinforces your interest and thanks the employer.

<p>Thank you for considering my application. I am eager to bring</p>	<p>Reinforce your interest in the job and the company.</p>
<p>my _____ <i>Relevant skill(s)/experience(s)</i></p>	<p>Thank the employer for considering your application. Express your eagerness to discuss the opportunity further.</p>
<p>to _____ and contribute to your team. <i>Company's name</i></p>	<p>Use a professional closing, such as "Sincerely," followed by your name.</p>

★ Bonus Tips:

- Save your cover letter as a PDF file with a professional file name, such as "[Your Name]_CoverLetter.pdf".
- Read your cover letter aloud to ensure it flows well and makes sense.
- Ask a friend or family member to review your cover letter for feedback.

Activity Guide: Crafting Your Cover Letter

Writing a cover letter can feel challenging, especially if it's your first time doing so. This guide is here to help! A cover letter is a short, formal document that you submit with your job application. It introduces you to the employer, highlights your skills, and explains why you're the best person for the job.

Use this guide to help you organize your thoughts, format your letter correctly, and make a strong first impression. Let's get started!

- Step 1 - Contact Information and Greeting** - At the top of your letter, include your name, address, phone number, and email. *Keep the formatting of this header consistent with the one on your resume.* Below your information, add the employer's name, title, company, and address.

- Step 2 - Opening Paragraph** - Start with a strong opening. Mention the job you're applying for and where you found the job listing. Share a brief statement about why you're interested in this position and the company.

- Step 3 - Body Paragraph** - Use the STAR method. Discuss any relevant skills and experiences that make you a good fit for the job. Include any work experience, school activities, or volunteer work that relates to the job.

- Step 4 - Closing Paragraph** - Summarize why you're excited about the role and how your skills align with the company's needs. Politely express your desire for an interview and include your availability.

- Step 5 - Double-check Your Writing** - Carefully check your cover letter for spelling and grammar mistakes. A clean, error-free letter makes a strong impression.

Template: Cover Letter

[Your Name]

City, State | (123) 456-7890 | no_reply@example.com | [LinkedIn URL](#)

[Employer's Name]

[Company's Name]

[Company's Address]

City, State, ZIP Code

Dear [Hiring Manager's Name],

I am writing to express my interest in the [Job Title] position at [Company's Name], as advertised on [Job Board/Company Website]. With my background in [Relevant Field/Industry] and my enthusiasm for [Specific Aspect of the Job or Company], I am confident that I can make a significant contribution to your team.

In my previous role as a [Previous Job Title] at [Previous Company], I developed strong [Relevant Skill] by [Specific Example]. This experience has prepared me to contribute to [Company's Name] by [How the Skill Applies to the Job]. Additionally, my [Another Relevant Skill] was instrumental in [Another Specific Example], which aligns with your need for [Specific Job Requirement].

I am particularly drawn to this opportunity at [Company's Name] because of your commitment to [Specific Value or Mission]. I share this commitment, having [Relevant Experience or Interest], and I am eager to bring my enthusiasm and skills to your team.

Thank you for considering my application. I am eager to bring my [Skill/Experience] to [Company's Name] and contribute to your team. I look forward to the possibility of discussing this opportunity with you further.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Exemplar(s): Cover Letter

Food Service Cover Letter Exemplar

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to express my interest in the Line Cook position at [Restaurant Name] as advertised. With a solid foundation in culinary arts gained through hands-on experience, along with a certification in food safety and handling, I am eager to bring my skills and passion for cooking to your kitchen team.

My culinary journey began in Harlem, where I pursued formal training that equipped me with essential kitchen skills and a deep understanding of food safety standards. In addition to my training, I have spent the past few years catering meals for friends and family, allowing me to refine my cooking techniques and develop my creativity in the kitchen. This experience has given me a strong ability to prepare and present meals that delight clients and meet their dietary needs.

As a parent to a young child, my drive to succeed is fueled by my desire to provide a stable and nurturing environment for my family. This personal motivation has instilled in me a strong work ethic and a commitment to excellence in everything I do. At Starbucks, I honed my ability to work efficiently under pressure in a high-volume environment, ensuring that every order met the company's high standards. This role not only enhanced my customer service skills but also reinforced my commitment to maintaining a clean and organized workspace, which I believe is crucial in a professional kitchen setting.

I am confident that my background, combined with my enthusiasm for learning and growing as a chef, makes me a strong candidate for the Line Cook position at [Restaurant Name]. I am particularly drawn to your restaurant's reputation for innovation and quality, and I would love the opportunity to contribute to your team while continuing to develop my culinary skills.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the possibility of discussing how I can be a valuable addition to your kitchen staff. Please feel free to contact me at [Phone Number] or via email at [Email Address] to schedule an interview.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Medical Billing Cover Letter Exemplar

Dear [Hiring Manager's Name],

I'm excited to apply for the Medical Biller and Coder position at [Company Name]. As a recent high school graduate with a passion for accuracy and numbers, I've recently completed an online training course in medical billing and coding, and I'm eager to apply my knowledge in a professional setting. I believe this role is a perfect fit for my skills and interests, and I'm enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute to your team.

During my time in high school, I consistently made the Math Honor Roll, which reflects my strong attention to detail and problem-solving abilities—qualities that are essential for a successful career in medical billing and coding. The online training I completed provided me with a solid foundation in coding standards, billing processes, and healthcare regulations. I've also gained hands-on experience with industry-standard software, which has prepared me to efficiently manage medical records and ensure accurate billing.

I'm drawn to this field because I understand the importance of accurate billing and coding in healthcare. Ensuring that patients' records are handled correctly and that billing is done efficiently helps to support the entire healthcare system. I'm confident that my education, combined with my passion for numbers and my commitment to excellence, will allow me to be a valuable asset to your team.

I would love the opportunity to further discuss how my skills and training align with the needs of [Company Name]. Thank you for considering my application. I'm available at your earliest convenience for an interview and can be reached at [Phone Number] or [Email Address].

Looking forward to the possibility of joining your team!

Best regards,
[Your Name]

Rubric: Crafting Your Cover Letter

Criteria	1: Needs Improvement	2: Developing	3: Proficient	4: Exemplary
Introduction	Did not write an introduction.	Wrote an introduction but lacked engagement.	Wrote an engaging introduction that clearly states the job and interest.	Wrote an exemplary introduction that is highly engaging and sets a strong tone.
Highlighting Skills	Did not highlight any skills.	Highlighted some skills but lacked specific examples.	Highlighted relevant skills with specific examples.	Thoroughly highlighted all relevant skills with clear and compelling examples.
Tailoring to Job	Did not tailor the cover letter to the job.	Tailored the cover letter but missed key alignments.	Tailored the cover letter effectively to the job requirements.	Exemplary tailoring with clear alignment to the job and company values.
Conclusion	Did not write a conclusion.	Wrote a conclusion but lacked clarity.	Wrote a clear and strong conclusion that reinforces interest.	Wrote an exemplary conclusion that leaves a highly positive impression.