A cover letter provides you the opportunity to introduce yourself, state the purpose of the letter, expand/amplify your qualifications for the position. The following checklist will assist you:

- **Heading:** YOUR name, address, city/state, zip code, phone number you can be reached, e-mail address; NOTE: You may use the same heading format used on your resume
  - Phone message needs to be professional
  - If your message system plays music while someone holds, be sure it is professional
  - E-mail addresses must be professional

- **Date:**
  - Always leave a minimum of one line between your address and heading
  - Date should be written in this format: month, day, year ex: September 14, 2014
  - Always leave a minimum of one line between the date and the beginning of the inside address

- **Inside Address:** This is the person/department you are sending the letter
  - Name of the individual you are sending the letter
  - Title of the individual
  - Name of the company or organization
  - Street Address
  - City/State Zip
  - Make every effort to find a name to direct the letter; or use a title (Dear Hiring Manager); avoid using To Whom It May Concern

- **Salutation:**
  - Use the standard greeting Dear ________________:
  - Use appropriate title for that person (Mr. Dr. MissMs.)
  - If you do not know the name of the individual, you may wish to use the title (Dear Human Resource Manager or Dear Director)

- **First Paragraph:**
  - Get to the point! State why you are writing, the specific position you are seeking and how you learned of the position. If you have been referred by someone inside the organization, include the individual’s name

- **Second Paragraph:**
  - Think about what specific experience, talents and abilities YOU have that are important to the employer and the position you are applying. Describe related qualifications and accomplishments from academic, work, volunteer and other experiences. Give concrete examples to DEMONSTRATE your ability to perform the job

- **Third Paragraph:**
  - Thank the employer for their time to review your resume and consider your application. Indicate you are looking forward to meeting with them to learn more about the job and how you may contribute to their organization

- **Closing:**
  - Use an appropriate closing (Sincerely, Best Regards or other suitable reference)

- **Signature:**
  - Leave four blank lines, then type your name
  - In the blank area, you need to sign your name

- **Additional Notes:**
  - Use the same paper for your cover letter as you used for your resume
  - ALWAYS write a new cover letter for each specific job opening
  - NEVER use a generic letter for cover letters
  - Cover letters should be only one page in length
  - Hand sign your name above the typewritten signature

---

Career Services ◆ UC206 ◆ 573.651.2583 ◆ careerservices@semo.edu ◆ www.semo.edu/careerservices