



## Hegi Family Career Development Center



## Demonstrate a History of Success!

# Table of Contents

<b>Career Center Contact Information</b>	p. 1
<b>Cover Letter Assistance &amp; Content Overview</b>	p. 2
<b>Resume Checklist</b>	p. 3
<b>Cover Letter Format</b>	p. 4
<b>Example Cover Letters</b>	pp. 5 - 7
<b>Business Letters</b>	p. 8 - 12

## Hegi Family Career Development Center Contact and Resource Information

### **Career Office Hours**

Hegi Family Career Development Center  
YOUR CHOICES. YOUR FUTURE. OUR PURPOSE.  
200 Hughes-Trigg Student Center  
M-F 8:30am - 5:00 pm  
214-768-2266

---

### **Online Services**

Visit us online for local, national and international career and internship opportunities as well as many other resources:

**MUSTANG TRAK** – regional jobs, internships  
**GOING GLOBAL** – national and international jobs and internships  
**RESUNATE** – Resume Building

---

### **Social Media**



## Cover Letter Assistance

The Hegi Family Career Development Center assists students by offering:

### Career Orientation Workshops

Career focused workshops that describe the cover letter do's and don'ts, as well as how to register with the career center and use our recruiting system. These are also available online.

### Resumania

Held each semester before the career fair. Employers volunteer to review resumes and cover letters and offer feedback.

### Cover Letter Review

Career Counselors are available daily to critique resumes and cover letters!

### Career Library

The Hegi Family Career Development Center and the BIC contain many resume and cover letter assistance books, including, but not limited to:

- Rileyguide.com
- Quintcareers.com
- "Cover Letter Magic"

### Internet Resources

Visit the career center's website at [www.smu.edu/career/](http://www.smu.edu/career/) and view our many websites that provide writing assistance.

## Additional Business Letters

It is important to maintain a professional standard when writing additional business letters. Some examples may include the following (see pg. 9 – 13):

- Informational Interview Request
- Interview Thank You Letter
- Response to a Rejection Letter
- Declining an Offer Letter
- Accepting an Offer Letter

## Cover Letter Content Overview

### Demonstrate a History of Success:

The cover letter is your introduction to a prospective employer that demonstrates why you are a **great** fit for a position. It should entice the reader to move on to the resume. It includes your **contact information, your qualifications and unique value, a thank you statement and a call to action.**

This is also the opportunity before meeting with an employer face-to-face to convey your **passion** for wanting to be a part of an organization or team.

A customized, informative cover letter distinguishes you from other applicants; **it is best to include one.**

### Be brief, 1 page in length:

Avoid rambling and writing cover letters over 1 page in length because it is a turn-off to employers. A concise cover letter that reflects and does not repeat what is on the resume is much more effective.

### Cover Letter Layout:

A simple paragraph format is the most commonly used layout. However, you can format in other ways such as a bulleted list to draw interest or place emphasis on specific information.

### Information Not Appropriate to Include:

- Negative information about a previous or existing employer
- Salary expectations (unless the employer specifically ask)
- Grammar or spelling errors
- Any content that may appear to seem insincere or desperate in tone (ie. "I just really need a job.")

# Cover Letter Checklist

## THE HEADER AND ADDRESSING YOUR COVER LETTER

	Try to maintain consistent formatting by using the same header as your resume which includes the most up-to-date contact information.
	Include the current date on the letter.
	Address the letter to the person who is likely to make hiring decisions. Research the organization to determine who that might be.
	When addressing females in the United States use Ms. Instead of Mrs. or Miss since you are unaware if she is married or single.
	Double-check the correct spelling of the contacts name and title before sending out the cover letter. For example "John" could be "Jon."

## TARGET YOUR MESSAGE AND HIGHLIGHT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

	Be sure to address why you are writing, how your qualifications fit the position and a direct call to action.
	Relate your skills and experience to the specific position in the organization you desire. Make sure to read the job description thoroughly.
	Customize your letter to fit each job description.
	Incorporate information that reflects your knowledge of the company, its industry and relevant issues.
	Expand on details in your resume, don't repeat it.
	Avoid using a weak tone in your language. For example, "I wish I will have the opportunity to speak with you" or "I hope my experience meets your needs." Instead state "I look forward to speaking with you soon" and "I am confident that my experience meets your needs."

## ADDITIONAL TIPS

	Write clearly and concisely. Check your letter for spelling and grammar. Proofread and have someone review your document.
	Use the same font and paper used for your resume.
	If you want to avoid submitting your resume and cover letter online or via e-mail as two separate documents, save them as one with your cover letter on top.

# COVER LETTER FORMAT

## The Header

Your Street Address      →(or use the same heading as on your resume)  
City, State, Zip

Today's Date

## The Target

(Space down 4 spaces)  
Ms. Ann James  
Vice President, Marketing  
Widgets, Inc.  
123 Grand Avenue  
Houston, TX 70890

Dear Ms. James:

## The Opening

**Why are you writing?** The opening paragraph should arouse the interest of the employer. State why you are writing, and give information to show your interest in the specific organization. If it is a letter of application, name the position for which you are applying and how you heard of it. Include the name of any referral in this paragraph.

## The Sale

**How do your qualifications fit with this job?** Point out your achievements or qualifications in this field, especially those that meet the job description or requirements. Refer the reader to your general qualifications on your enclosed resume. Highlight important points from your resume. Also highlight points that will be of particular interest to this specific organization.

## The Close

**Follow-up.** The closing paragraph should pave the way for the interview by asking for an appointment, or by offering to call the employer in the near future, or by some similar suggestions to facilitate an immediate and favorable reply.

Sincerely,

Karen E. Jones (Sign here)

Karen E. Jones

Enclosure ( You are noting that you have enclosed your resume.)

# **SHAWNA BANKS**

1000 SMU Blvd. • Dallas, Texas 75230  
(214) 555-1212 • shawnaemail@smu.edu

---

September 3, 20xx

Martha Matthews  
President and CEO  
Cyber Globe Industries  
1039 Pilgrim's Highway  
Austin, TX 71111

Dear Ms. Matthews:

I learned through the SMU Career Center that you plan to visit our campus this fall to interview candidates for jobs in your international division, and I want to make you aware of my sincere interest in the \_\_\_\_\_ position.

As a French major, I speak the language fluently. I am also proficient in Russian and Italian. My minor is in International Business, and I have traveled extensively in Europe and Asia. Therefore, I am well-versed in global trade and competition.

I recognize you will need competent managers with international knowledge to help implement your overseas operations. My language and interpersonal skills perfectly match your needs and I feel confident that my education and internship with an international transportation company have prepared me well for this position.

I look forward to being selected for an interview with you and discussing your expectations and my qualifications. I will contact you the week of September 10, 20xx, to further explore the possibility of employment with your company. Should you wish to contact me in the meantime, I may be reached at 214-521-7777.

Sincerely,

[signature here]

Shawna Banks  
Enclosure

# RONNIE MCDONALD

1000 Walnut Hill • Dallas, Texas 75295 • (214) 777-1212 • RonnieM@e-mail.com

---

March 8, 20xx

XYZ Corporation  
Human Resources Department  
1039 Street Lane  
Dallas, TX 75222

RE: EFG Position

Dear Hiring Committee:

As an ambitious and achievement-oriented senior at Southern Methodist University, I am excited about beginning my career in a fast-paced and dynamic organization such as XYZ Corporation. My strong academic background in psychology and business, and relevant skills will prove to be valuable to your company.

I am confident that my competencies would allow me to bring the following value to your team:

- **Leadership** and **initiative** demonstrated as founding member and president of the ABC Business Organization.
- Competence in **public speaking with the ability to communicate** with diverse audiences.
- Aptitude **to identify, analyze and solve business problems** utilizing various technology mediums.

I am a candidate who has a strong work ethic and enjoys a challenge. I have consistently worked over 25 hours a week while handling a full-time academic load. Additionally, I've held leadership positions, all while maintaining a GPA of 3.6/4.0.

I welcome the opportunity to further discuss how I can be an asset in the EFG role. Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Enthusiastically,

[signature here]

Ronnie McDonald  
Enclosure

# Brittany Lewis

334 Street Lane ▪ Dallas, TX 78888 ▪ [brittany@email.com](mailto:brittany@email.com) ▪ 214-888-8888

---

August 28, 20xx

Perfect Company  
124 Street Ave.  
Dallas, TX 75555

RE: Part-time Administrative Assistant Position

Dear Hiring Manager:

I was excited to learn of the part-time Administrative Assistant Position posted in Southern Methodist University MustangTrak database. I am confident that my skills and relevant experience can serve as a benefit to your organization.

Your position requires	And I deliver...
1 year of administrative experience	Over 3 years of administrative experience developing procedures and improving processes
Proficiency in Microsoft Office	Over 6 years of demonstrated proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access producing documents, reports, and presentations; Experience with Publisher and CS4
Strong communication skills with ability to work with internal staff and external clients	Exceptional communication skills with success in working with teams and developing relationships with diverse constituents

My enclosed resume will provide you with additional experience and skills that are well suited for this opportunity. I thank you for your consideration in advance and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Regards,

[signature here]

Brittany Lewis



**Joan Smith**  
1225 Binkley  
Dallas, Texas 75275  
214-333-3333  
joan@email.com

**Informational Interview /  
Networking Letter**

Letter designed to request to connect with an individual to receive information about a prospective career.

This is a networking opportunity, and not the time to ask for a job

August 1, 20xx

Joan Smith  
Belo Corporation  
Dallas, Texas

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am a journalism student in my third year at Southern Methodist University. I learned from Dr. White who is one of my professors, that you are an alumna and majored in journalism while you were here at SMU. Dr. White suggested that I contact you as you would be in an excellent position to assist me in a career decision.

As a journalism student I have had several opportunities to gain experience through working for our school's newspaper, writing several articles which were submitted to a local magazine and working at a summer internship with the Chamber of Commerce in my hometown. I will be participating in on-campus interviewing next semester and would like to go into these interviews with a clear sense of direction. I am considering several career options and would appreciate your advice on various career paths.

Would you be available for a brief meeting to talk about career paths in journalism? I shall call you next week to see if we can arrange a time at your convenience. Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

[signature here]

Joan Smith

# Cindy Lopper

217 Street Lane Dallas, TX 76688 • 214-123-4566 • [cindy.lopper@e-mail.com](mailto:cindy.lopper@e-mail.com)

---

October 12, 20xx

Ms. Susan Bradshaw  
Acme Company  
111 Street Lane  
Dallas, TX 76688

## Thank You Letter

Letter expressing your appreciation and gratitude for being interviewed.

Send a **customized** thank you letter to each interviewer within the organization.

It may be handwritten or sent via e-mail (3-4 lines without header).

Dear Ms. Bradshaw:

It was a pleasure speaking with you about the Analyst position with Acme Company. After learning about your office culture and training programs, I am even more excited about the opportunity to become a part of your team.

As I mentioned, I have worked extremely hard to acquire all the relevant skills you are seeking. I look forward to hearing from you over the next week regarding my candidacy.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[signature here]

Cindy Lopper

**John Donaldson**  
214-456-7890 ▪ [jdonald@e-mail.com](mailto:jdonald@e-mail.com)

---

May 10, 20xx

Mr. Clay Smith  
Manager  
XYZ Company  
123 Alley Lane  
Dallas, TX 75555

Dear Mr. Smith:

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to interview for the Actuary position with XYZ Company. Although I am disappointed I was not selected, I enjoyed meeting with you and your team to learn about your organization.

I would sincerely appreciate it if you would keep me in mind for future opportunities, as I am still interested in working for your company.

Thank you again for your time and consideration of my credentials.

Sincerely,

[signature here]

John Donaldson

**Response to a Rejection  
Letter**

Letter to leave a positive  
lasting impression and  
express interest in future  
opportunities.

# ANNA JACKSON

214-555-5555 ▪ [annajack@e-mail.com](mailto:annajack@e-mail.com)

---

April 25, 20xx

Katie Lewis  
Human Resource Manager  
LMN Company  
222 Street Lane  
Houston, TX 76688

Dear Ms. Lewis,

After receiving the offer letter, I am extremely pleased to accept the Program Coordinator and look forward to being an employee with LMN Company.

I agree and accept the following terms of the offer:

- Salary - \$35,000 per year
- 2 weeks' vacation to begin 6 months after employment
- Tentative start date of May 15, 20xx and reporting to Program Director Michael Johnson

If you require any additional information of me or have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 214-555-5555. Thank you for all of your help and I look forward to being a contributing member of the organization.

Sincerely,

[signature here]

Anna Jackson

## Acceptance Letter

Letter to accept a job offer and specify terms of the offer.

Be sure to indicate any special conditions agreed upon by human resources and your hiring manager.

# Rodney Peterson

123 Forrest Tr. • Dallas, TX 73333 • 214-888-8888 • [rodp@e-mail.com](mailto:rodp@e-mail.com)

---

November 8, 20xx

Mr. David James  
Senior Associate  
True Consulting  
145 Riverbend Road  
Dallas, TX 79999

Dear Mr. James

I would like to sincerely thank you for the job offer with True Consulting. I appreciate the time you have taken to inform me of the Junior Associate position.

After much thought, I have decided that I must respectfully decline your offer. Although this has been an extremely difficult decision, I believe it is the best one for me at this current time.

I wish you the best in finding another candidate for this opportunity. Again, thank you so much for your time and consideration and I hope our paths cross again in the future.

Sincerely,

[signature here]

Rodney Peterson

## Declining an Offer Letter

Letter to **respectfully** decline a job offer.

This letter is a way avoid “burning a bridge” with an employer that you may consider working for in the future.