

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY DEDMAN SCHOOL OF LAW
OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

CHECKLIST FOR COVER LETTERS

Content	Format
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Asked for consideration in a strong opening sentence that identified my interest	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Individualized and personalized letter
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Mentioned source of referral, if any	<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Sent original typewritten letter without errors or erasures
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Demonstrated enthusiasm and energy through use of language, style, and tone appropriate to my field	<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Addressed letter directly to the individual conducting the interviewing
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Used words that are simple and direct	<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Double-checked all spelling, grammar, and punctuation
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Did not simply reiterate information on résumé, but rather quantified experiences, where possible, and expanded on accomplishments	<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Length absolutely no longer than one page , 11 or 12-point font
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Appealed to the employer's self-interest by demonstrating that I researched the organization and stated how I can fulfill their needs	<input type="checkbox"/> 16. Used a good-quality (10 lb., watermarked, white or cream) paper that matches résumé and envelope
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Wrote to-the-point with challenging ideas which show the benefit of meeting me	<input type="checkbox"/> 17. Wrote in traditional business-letter format
<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Used the word "I" sparingly or not at all and avoided beginning sentences with "I", when possible— in any case, did <u>not</u> begin every sentence with "I"	<input type="checkbox"/> 18. Wrote in date-planner to make follow-up call on proper date, if so indicated in letter
<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Was positive and truthful about accomplishments, giving detailed accounts of particular skills and experience that relate directly to the position	<input type="checkbox"/> 19. Retained copy of letter for my records
<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Requested to have a "talk", "discussion", or "meeting", rather than an interview	<input type="checkbox"/> 20. Made sure my address and phone number were correct and consistent on cover letter, résumé, and envelope
	<input type="checkbox"/> 21. <u>SIGNED MY NAME!</u>