



Lesson Plan

Cover Letter: Can Less Be More?

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STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing these activities students will...

1. Identify the components and format of cover letters.
2. Discover favorable and less favorable examples of cover letters.
3. Compose an individualized cover letter.

TIME REQUIRED: 30 minutes

RESOURCES:

1. FFA.org
2. Website: The Best Cover Letter I Ever Received, <https://hbr.org/2009/06/the-best-cover-letter>

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. A copy of the "Less is More" worksheet for each student
2. Internet access to view the article above

THIS QUICK LESSON PLAN WOULD WORK WELL AS PART OF:

1. A career unit.
2. A job interview lesson/unit.

THESE ACTIVITIES ARE ALIGNED TO THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS:

FFA Precept

- FFA.PL-A.Action: Assume responsibility and take the necessary steps to achieve the desired results, no matter what the goal or task at hand.
- FFA.PL-F.Continuous Improvement: Accept responsibility for learning and personal growth.
- FFA.PG-I.Professional Growth: Assume responsibility for attaining and improving upon the skills needed for career success.
- FFA.CS-M.Communication: Effectively interact with others in personal and professional settings.

AFNR Cluster Skills

- CS.05. Describe career opportunities and means to achieve those opportunities in each of the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources career pathways.

Common Core- Writing

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Common Core- Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

AFNR Career Ready Practices

- CRP.04. Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason. Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal and/or visual methods.
- CRP.10. Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals. Career-ready individuals take personal ownership of their own educational and career goals, and the regularly act on a plan to attain these goals.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

- Communication
- Initiative and Self-direction
- Leadership and Responsibility

LESSON PLAN:

1. *Introduction:* To help students understand the length of a cover letter necessary to capture the attention of a potential employer, have them read the example cover letter in the worksheet "Less is More." Then ask the following questions:
 - a. *What are your thoughts on this cover letter?*
 - b. *Does it address everything needed?*
 - c. *Do you think it is too short? Why?*
 - d. *If you knew that you could create a short cover letter similar to the example, would you be more likely to complete one?*
 - e. *What are the benefits of having a shorter cover letter?*

Today, we're going to discuss how to create an effective cover letter to help you get a job interview.

2. *Activity:*
 - a. Direct students to the online resource, The Harvard Business Review: The Best Cover Letter I Ever Received. The direct url is <https://hbr.org/2009/06/the-best-cover-letter>.
 - i. Each student will need a copy of the handout "Less Is More".
 - b. After finishing the worksheet, have each student complete their own five-sentence cover letter.
3. *Follow-up:* Review the components and format of short cover letters with the class.
4. *Leveling up:* Now that the students know the components, the formatting and the content of a good cover letter, have them create a cover letter and use it to get a job.

NAME: _____

Aligned to the following standards:
FFA.PL-A; FFA.PL.F; FFA.PG-I; FFA.CS-M; CS.05;
CCSS.W.9-12.2; CCSS.SL.9-12.1; CRP.04;
CRP.10

Less is More

DIRECTIONS:

Part 1: Read the cover letter below and participate in the discussion with your class.

Dear David:

I am writing in response to the opening for xxxx, which I believe may report to you.

I can offer you seven years of experience managing communications for top-tier xxxx firms, excellent project-management skills, and a great eye for detail, all of which should make me an ideal candidate for this opening.

I have attached my resume for your review and would welcome the chance to speak with you sometime.

Best regards,

Xxxx Xxxx

Part 2: Now that you know the components of a short cover letter, create your own. Try to make this document as close to five sentences as possible.

Write an opening:

Write a short paragraph that includes three skills you'd like to showcase:

Write a closing:

Now that you have all of the elements, create your final short cover letter on another page.