Cover Letter Checklist

Most people do not spend enough time working on their cover letter, but it is often the first impression that you make with a potential employer. Below are some key things to keep in mind to help you write a cover letter that will get the employer's attention!

FORMAT
❑ Should not be longer than one page with appropriate font size and margins
❑ Follows business format and contains your contact information
❑ Contains accurate employer information and includes an appropriate salutation
❑ Easy to read and divided into paragraphs of appropriate lengths
❑ Content within each paragraph is well-organized, flows and easy to follow
❑ Free of typos, spelling and grammar mistakes – again proofreading is essential!   * A cover letter is a sample of your writing skills and the quality of your work
INTRODUCTION
❑ Customized to the position and organization
❑ Includes where/how you found out about the position
❑ Shows genuine interest in the position and captures the employer's attention
❑ Highlights key strengths/assets that you would bring to the position and organization
MIDDLE PARAGRAPH(S)
❑ Middle paragraphs support the key strengths highlighted in the introduction; any skills, knowledge and attributes described in your letter should match the employer's requirements
❑ Provides 2-3 strong examples to support your stated strengths (e.g. if leadership skills are important provide an example that clearly demonstrates your strong leadership skills)
❑ Includes an appropriate amount of detail in examples to illustrate relevant skills and attributes
❑ Shows fit with the organization (can also be done in opening and/or closing paragraph)   – do your homework and be sure to research the organization
CLOSING
❑ Can reiterate interest in and fit with the position and/or organization
❑ Thank the employer and requests next steps with confidence; could also include contact info.
❑ Includes an appropriate closing salutation and signs the cover letter

Visit the UTM Career Centre's Online Resume and Cover Letter Toolkit for more details.