

# Tufts Career Center FAQ of the Week

## What's the best way to tailor a cover letter? Is it okay to use a template and swap one employer name for another?

It's tempting to create a "general" cover letter and use it for different jobs or internships. But resist the temptation!

*Think about how you'd feel in this situation ...*

You receive two letters: #1 is clearly meant for you, while #2 is generic and could be going to anyone and everyone. Which is more likely to get your attention? (Easy answer!) Consider doing the following to show a potential employer or networking contact that you're paying attention:

**Cover the basics:** If possible, always address a piece of correspondence to a specific person vs. "Dear Hiring Manager" (and definitely not "To Whom It May Concern")

**Speak to your audience.** Show that you know something about the employer to whom you're writing. What's happening with their organization lately? How do your professional or personal pursuits sync with what's important to them?

**Pass the test:** Pretend to remove the employer name from your letter. Can you still tell that it's intended for one particular organization? If so, you've probably done your homework. If you're unsure, try to come up with additional ways to customize your message.

For more about cover letter writing and sample letters, [visit the Cover Letters page of our website.](#)



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