



WHEATON
COLLEGE
For Christ & His Kingdom

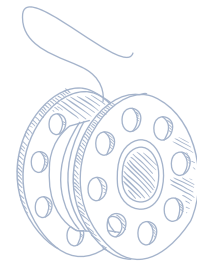
RESUME & COVER LETTER: MAKING THEM YOURS

In today's highly competitive job market, customizing both your [resume](#) and [cover letter](#) to each individual position will differentiate you from other applicants and demonstrate that you are the ideal fit for the opportunity.

This is often the difference between moving forward in the hiring process and being passed over for another candidate. Keep in mind that a resume is not a static document! Your resume will change and adapt to show how your experiences are relevant to the particular opportunity in front of you.

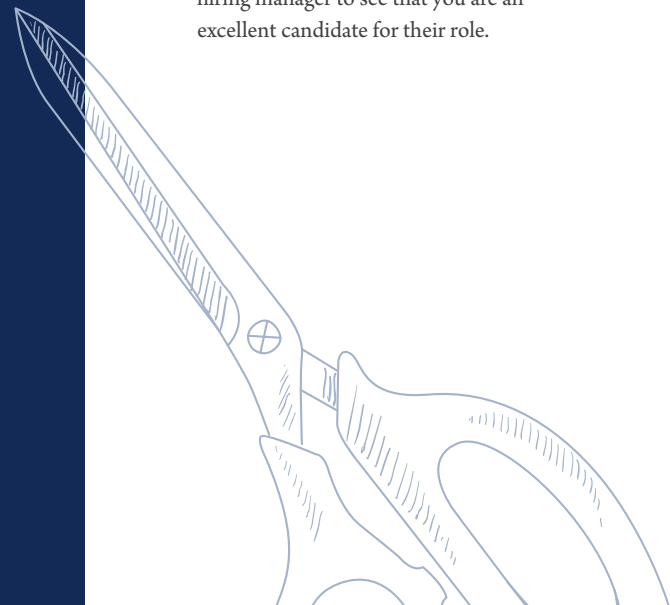
250+

Many open positions
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WHY TAILOR YOUR DOCUMENTS?

While it might seem obvious to you why your past experiences make you a great fit for this role, you also have to convince the hiring manager! A well-tailored cover letter and resume are your opportunities to tell a strategic story about your skills and accomplishments, and show hiring managers how the skills you honed in your last internship or job fit their criteria. Tailoring these documents well makes it easy for the hiring manager to see that you are an excellent candidate for their role.



HERE'S HOW

SKILLS: USE KEYWORDS, NOT BUZZWORDS.

Tailoring your resume and cover letter starts by including the right keywords. The great part about keywords is that the employer has

already come up with them for you; you simply have to **recognize** them and **reuse** them. How do you do that? It's a simple two-step process.

STEP 1

Identify how your background and skills align with the role. Take a look at the job description. Once you know to look for them, keywords become pretty obvious. They will often relate to things like:

- Wording used to describe the business and position (“Fast-paced and varied work environment,” “Innovative and collaborative team,” “Independent work environment,” etc.)
- Skills – both required and preferred
- Types of experience the employer is looking for

Highlight and write down the keywords. Pay close attention to the specific wording used, and make special note if a skill or experience is mentioned more than once on the job description. Once you’ve compiled a list, you should be able to draft a brand statement that follows the format below:

My _____, _____, and _____ make me an excellent candidate for this opportunity.

Here are two examples for cover letter content: “My academic background in marketing, my skills in data-driven storytelling, as well as my internship experience in social media and data analysis make me an excellent candidate for this opportunity.”

“My three years of experience in sales and customer service, my skills in fundraising and development, and my passion for helping diverse communities access health-focused education make me an excellent candidate for this position.”

STEP 2

Accomplishments: Incorporating the keywords into your resume and cover letter. It's time to connect your story to the opportunity. Use strong [accomplishment statements](#) that contain those key words to strategically tell the story of how you've used critical skills, and be sure to include **quantified results** whenever possible!

Do the same in your cover letter—look for opportunities to use keyword language in how you articulate your experience, skills, personal strengths, goals, and passions. Don't be afraid to use the same keyword more than once on your resume:

- In your education section
- In your experience section
- In your skills section

Differentiate Yourself! Think about what might make you different from any other qualified candidate. Sometimes this is a specific passion you have, or something compelling about your background that seems relevant to the position. Be sure to make this claim clearly in the cover letter and audit the resume to make sure it supports this claim. Sometimes your connections can

help differentiate you! Do you have a connection with someone in the organization or department who would be willing to let you reference them in your cover letter? Pro-tip: **always** check with a person first before you namedrop them!