A Checklist for Cover Letters

- ❏ Does the letter follow an acceptable format for a business letter? (See a Web site or a handbook for a discussion of business-letter formats.)
- ❏ Is the letter addressed to a person rather than to a position? ("Dear Ms.Plotnic" is preferable to "Dear Personnel Manager."
- ❏ Does the first paragraph specifically identify the position being sought?
- ❏ Does the letter indicate how the student learned about the position?
- ❏ Does the letter acknowledge all requirements mentioned in the ad or job description?
- ❏ Does the applicant talk in terms of what he or she can do for the employer rather than the other way around? (With the exception of those applying for internships, which are set up to help people learn and gain hands-on experience, applicants are assumed to bring knowledge or expertise to a position; therefore, statements like "I expect to increase my knowledge about the accounting field" are out of place.)
- ❏ Is the letter error free?

source: *The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors* by Leigh Ryan and Lisa Zimmerelli, fifth edition.