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This is Eastern Michigan University's Career Corner, hosted by the career coaches of the University Advising and Career Development Center. And welcome to Season 4, Career FAQ.

Welcome back to the Career Corner Podcast. This is career coach, Brad Minton. I'm excited to be back with you for yet another fantastic short episode addressing another common career related question. This one is all about cover letters.

So many students wonder, should I even include a cover letter with my application and resume? This is a fantastic question that we do get very often and with good reason. The fact of the matter is, in many circumstances now, a cover letter is seen more as an accessory, as many job postings indicate that they're optional or not even required. Further, many recruiters and hiring managers indicate that they either skim or don't read them at all. So I guess the question is, should you even include them knowing all of this?

Well, the answer is yes. The fact of the matter is that we have a competitive job market, and every opportunity that you have to separate yourself from the competition should be seized, if you have an opportunity to do so. I often say that the resume is the black and white. It tells the story to an employer of what you know, what you've done, what you've learned, where you've worked, and how long you were there. It's the concrete measurables.

The cover letter, on the other hand, really speaks to things that can't always be measured or documented in the same way. A great cover letter tells a story, and it's more of the gray to the resume's black and white. Where the resume can describe what, how, when, and where of your career, the cover letter can really communicate the why. It can tell an employer why you, and even more importantly, why them.

An impactful cover letter showcases your personality. And this is a critical component because employers hire on three things-- personality, aptitude, and experience. So it's so important to remember, for students in particular, that even if you lack experience and maybe lack some of the tools, the cover letter can help bridge that experience gap and highlight your personality, and your aptitude, and how you can leverage that into your next role.

To highlight, here's just a few quick stats that maybe could bring this home for you. 83% of respondents in a recent survey claimed that a great cover letter can secure you an interview, even if your resume isn't good enough. 74% of recruitment decision makers prefer to receive job applications which include cover letters apart from resumes. And 72% of recruiters still expect cover letters, even if the job ad states that they're optional.

So the moral of the story is that the cover letter-- while not always is going to be read, which we know-- it can still help position you as a stronger candidate in a competitive field, and it can still give you that edge that you need.

So we hope this information was helpful for you today. Stay tuned for next week's episode. And remember, if you're working on crafting your cover letter and need some assistance, you can schedule an appointment on Handshake with a corporate relations manager at [emich.joinhandshake.com](https://emich.joinhandshake.com).

Thank you, and remember we're here for you, and we support your goals.

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