THE COVER LETTER

The cover letter is as important as the resume. It serves as a letter of intent, summary of your resume, and writing sample. Therefore time and careful effort is needed to produce the desired effect. It is recommended that you create a unique cover letter for each job to which you are submitting an application.

THE FORMAT

Your Address  (This part can also look like the top of your resume)
City, State, Zip Code

Date

Full Name of Contact Person
Title of Contact Person
Name of Organization
Street Address or PO Box #
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. / Ms. Last Name:

Opening Paragraph: State why you are writing. Identify the position you are applying for and how you heard of the opening or organization. Express your professional connection with the organization, something you know or like about them. Tell them why you are applying. Restate your intentions.

Body Paragraph(s): In the first sentence, state your experience as it relates to the position you are applying for. Next, in one or two sentences, describe roles and accomplishments that make you the ideal candidate for the position. Finally, in two or three sentences, highlight how your experience connects to the position and how your experience will allow you to contribute to the role. Emphasize and incorporate your experience around job description and requirements of job posting. Depending on your experience, you may have two paragraphs but be sure they are fluid and concise.

Closing Paragraph: Your closing should reiterate your interest in the position and give specific information about how you can be reached. Thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Your Name Typed

THINGS TO REMEMBER

• If you don’t have a person’s contact name, you can address the letter to their title (i.e. Human Resources Manager). If you don’t have a title you can address it to Dear Search Committee. Never address it: Dear Sir or Madam or To Whom it May Concern.
• Sign your name before faxing or mailing the letter.
• If you are sending a cover letter by e-mail, copy and paste the letter into the body of the e-mail message. You do not have to electronically sign your letter.
• Always send the letter as an attachment.
• Be sure everything on your cover letter is also on your resume. You shouldn’t mention something in the letter you do not have reflected elsewhere.
• Do not re-write your resume in paragraph format.
• Proofread your document for spelling and grammar, or use a 3rd party proofreader.
• Use keywords and industry-specific language
• Save a copy of each and every cover letter you write!