

## **COVER LETTER FORMAT**

You only get ONE chance to make a FIRST impression, so be sure to spell and grammar check your letter. Read it out loud and ask someone else to review it, too.

### **Before you write....**

#### **Format**

Using the same heading on your resume for your letter creates a polished appearance. The letter should be on standard paper, 8.5x11. The margins should be 1" on all sides. The letter should be brief and not exceed one page.

#### **Greeting**

Try to find the name of a person involved in the hiring process. If that is not possible, use greetings such as "Dear Human Resources Manager:" or "Dear Hiring Manager:" Use a colon after the name. Don't use "Dear Sir or Madame:" or "To Whom It May Concern:"

#### **First Paragraph**

Refer to the position and how you learned about the opening. Include content that will capture the employer's attention, such as a skillset that directly aligns with the position, or a mutual contact.

#### **Middle Paragraph**

Connect your qualifications and experiences with the employer's stated requirements and needs, which can be found on the job description. Researching the organization will help you to tailor this paragraph; it also shows the employer that you are resourceful. Include examples of how you have applied the skills they are seeking.

#### **Closing Paragraph**

Remind the employer of why you're the best candidate. Show initiative by stating that you will call within the next week or two to inquire about an interview. If the job posting states that the employer does not accept phone calls, don't say you will contact them by phone, and don't call. If an employer doesn't call you back, don't be offended. After two or three once-a-week calls, stop. They will contact you if they're interested.