

## **Guidelines for Writing a Cover Letter**

### **The Magical Four Paragraph Style**

The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce yourself to the employer to whom you are applying. Your cover letter should reflect your personality, your attention to detail, communication skills, enthusiasm and your intellect.

Your cover letter is the first thing employers see even before your resume. Make yours a good first impression!

#### **FIRST PARAGRAPH**

- Identify the job you are applying for and how you learned about it
- Indicate you have attached enclosures with the letter (resume and portfolio if applicable)
- This paragraph should be brief; no more than two or three sentences.

#### **SECOND PARAGRAPH**

- State your qualifications for the specific position you are applying for.
- Demonstrate how your background and experience qualify you for the job.
- Be as specific as possible
- Stick to the facts about your competency, skills and attitude.

#### **THIRD PARAGRAPH**

- Refer to research you have done about the company and how it relates to your interests.
- Illustrate your knowledge about the employer, key projects they have underway (if applicable to your skills), their corporate culture, and any unique working conditions.
- Indicate your willingness to meet for an interview.

#### **FOURTH PARAGRAPH**

- Close with one or two sentences thanking your reader and sharing that you are looking forward to hearing from them in the near future.

#### **OTHER**

- Sign your name in pen above your typed name.
- Tell them what is attached by using "Enclosure: Resume, Application Form and References" etc.

*Remember, the goal of the cover letter is to secure an interview. An excellent cover letter will help ensure you get an interview and will identify key strengths or themes you would like to discuss - themes that are at the heart of the employer's enterprise.*