**How to Write a Cover Letter**

A cover letter is an important element of your pitch to a potential hiring manager. The purpose is to build enough interest in you as a candidate that the reader will be motivated to turn to the resume for the details.

The cover letter is not a Reader’s Digest version of your professional life. It is a tactical and thoughtful presentation of the facts and evidence that support your claim that you can do this job. The hiring manager wants to be assured that you could walk in, sit down and get right to work. An effective cover letter is direct and specific.

**Paragraph One - *Grab their Attention***

1. Drop a name if you can. *“John Smith suggested that I write…”*
2. Name the position you are applying to.
3. Tell how you learned of the position - a job posting, through a personal referral.
4. A sentence that communicates that you know about the company
* You know someone who works there
* You use the product
* You read about them somewhere
* You did some research on them

**Paragraph Two *– Show Your Value***

1. Lead off with your strongest reason that you would be a great fit for this position. Often this is focused on your past experience and transferable skills developed in a similar position.
2. Match your experience and skill set to the specific job. Keep in mind your goal of illustrating your value and/or what you will contribute.
3. Do not be tempted to go into too much detail. The resume and then the interview is where you can explain all the relevant details. *“My attached resume gives additional details on my experience and accomplishments.”*

**Paragraph Three – *Call to Action***

1. Make a strong action expected close. *“I welcome the opportunity to discuss how my skills sets and experiences could add value to (Company name).”*
2. *“Thank you for your consideration.”*

**Additional Tips:**

* If you do not know who will be receiving the cover letter, address it to *“Dear Hiring Manager”*
* Always submit a cover letter when given the opportunity. Recruiters report that it makes a positive impression.
* Check your spelling and grammar.