

FORMATTING CONSIDERATIONS

Remember, you will be submitting your cover letter along with your resume. Therefore, you want to create a consistent and professional look for both documents. This is best accomplished by:

- Using the same format for your cover letter header as used on your resume. Think of it as your own personalized stationary/letterhead for the job search.
- Using the same font type and font size as your resume. The font size for your cover letter should be between 11 and 12 point. 10 point font is not recommended for a cover letter.
- Using the same margins as your resume.

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

The first paragraph of your cover letter should contain a few sentences that address:

- Who you are.
- Why you are writing.
- How you found out about the opportunity. This is the appropriate place to reference any prior contact with the employer through your networking efforts.
- Information on additional documents you have provided (i.e., resume).

PARAGRAPH #2 – STATING YOUR INTEREST

The second paragraph addresses the question – Why are you interested in the opportunity? You should include information that demonstrates both your interest in the specific position, as well as the employer. Your goal is to come across as sincere and focused in your interest. You should also address any geographic concerns in this paragraph (i.e., you are applying for a position that is based outside of your current city/region).

PARAGRAPH #3 – HIGHLIGHTING YOUR SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

The third paragraph addresses the question – Why should the employer be interested in considering you for the position? This is your opportunity to convince the employer that your skills, experience and background match the stated hiring criteria for the position. Take the time to target this paragraph based on information included in the job posting. Incorporate the language used in the job posting into your cover letter. For example if the hiring criteria listed in the job posting lists leadership, teamwork and communication skills as essential then you should make it a point to use those exact terms in this paragraph.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH

The closing paragraph of your cover letter contains a few sentences that:

- Reiterate your strong interest in the opportunity.
- Encourage the employer to contact you should they need additional information.
- Thank the employer for their consideration.