# **Writing Effective Cover Letters**

Appearance and Format

* Cover letter is one page in length and in business letter formatting
* Cover letter is written for a specific position or written for a specific company
* Language is professional and there are no grammatical or spelling errors (any misspelling will automatically disqualify your cover letter)
* Standard font (such as Aptos, Arial, Calibri, Palatino, Times New Roman) and sizes (10–12 pt.) used; matches resume

Contact Information

* Your contact information is first, followed by the date
* The address for the company is underneath the date of submission and above the body of your letter.
* Greeting indicates name of appropriate contact and ends with a colon (i.e. Dear Mr. James Smith)
* If no name can be found it is addressed Dear Search Committee or Dear Hiring Manager (not To Whom it
* May Concern)

Introduction Paragraph

* Includes reason for applying and how you learned of the job opening
* When writing the name of the position you are applying for, refer to the position number listed on the job post.
* Summarize strongest qualifications by emphasizing relevant skills that you bring to that company/organization
* Demonstrates interest in the company/organization and the position

Body Paragraphs (1 to 3 paragraphs)

* Clearly shows knowledge of the company and the position
* Conveys enthusiasm for the position
* Avoids repetitive phrasing (Stay away from beginning every sentence begins with word “I” or “My”)
* Uses specific examples from past work/volunteer/education to demonstrate how your qualifications
* match the organization’s needs
* Utilizes action-oriented verbs to communicate past accomplishments (always good to quantify this information)
* Focus on how your experiences/skills can help the organization accomplish its goals
* Cover letter simply doesn’t restate your resume. When providing examples, make sure they relate to the position you are applying for.

Conclusion Paragraph

* Expresses interest in an interview
* Reiterate your strengths for the position and why you believe you are the strongest fit for the position.
* Includes contact information for the employer to contact
* Thank the recipient for their time and consideration

Closing

* Signs off with a professional closing (i.e. Sincerely,)
* Includes signature (a script font or photo of signature preferred)