

# GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A COVER LETTER

## The Magical Four Paragraph Cover Letter

The Purpose of covering letter is to introduce yourself to the employer to whom you are applying. Your cover letter is your personal ambassador. It reflects your personality, your attention to detail, your communication skills, your enthusiasm and your intellect. An employer will decide whether or not you will reach the next phase in the employment process-the interview- based on the information in your application package. The four-paragraph cover letter could cast the magic spell you need.

### First Paragraph

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

### Second Paragraph

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- State your qualifications for the position.
- Deconstruct the job description and list the required skills, duties and responsibilities.
- Focus on relevant qualifications listed in your resume and discuss them in detail, demonstrating how your background and experience qualify you for the job.
- Be as specific as possible, and refer the reader to your resume for additional details.
- Stick to the facts about your competency, skills and attitude. Never dismiss the skills of others.

### Third Paragraph

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- 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, their corporate culture, and any unique working conditions.
- Indicate your willingness to meet for an interview.

### Fourth Paragraph

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- Close with one or two sentence paragraph thanking your reader for his or her time consideration.

### Other

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- Sign your name in pen above your typed name, phone, and email
- Tell them what it attached by using an “Enclosure: Resume, Application Form and Letter of Reference” statement

*Remember: the goal of the cover letter is to secure an interview. An excellent cover letter will ensure you will get the interview and identify key themes you'd like to discuss – themes that are at the heart of the employer's enterprise.*