

## The Cover Letter

Your cover letter should be submitted with your resume. Always try to address the letter to a specific individual by name and title. Your letter should include at least three paragraphs.

- ◆ In the *first paragraph*, indicate why you are writing. Did you see an ad in the paper or did your neighbor tell you about a job opening at the company? Are you seeking financial support or college admission?
- ◆ In the *second paragraph*, tell the reader why you consider yourself among the best qualified: sell yourself! Mention your strengths and your experiences. Correlate these to the skills required by the position or school. Highlight your accomplishments and achievements (See your "Accomplishments and Activities" folder) and indicate how they will transfer to the targeted outcome. Refer the reader to your resume.
- ◆ In the *final paragraph*, you want to ask for action. Ask for an interview or consideration for financial support or college entrance. Let the reader know how to contact you.

### For Your Portfolio:

Write a cover letter for a job you would like to have. Be sure your letter is typed and that you used correct grammar and business format. Never use abbreviations. Use the Sample Cover Letter as a guide. Your cover letter should be prepared on the same type of paper as your resume. Be sure to use the same typestyle as well.

### Review Questions:

Once you have drafted your letter, ask your teacher, guidance counselor, or another adult to review it. They should answer these questions:

- ◆ Is it addressed to a specific person? (You can usually get a name by calling the receptionist at the business.)
- ◆ Does it mention the job, financial support, or college admission that is desired?
- ◆ Will it make you stand out above the other applicants?
- ◆ Does it complement and refer to your resume? You don't want to say the same things in both. Let one complement the other.
- ◆ Does it ask for action?
- ◆ Does it use proper business format?
- ◆ Is it smudge and error free?
- ◆ Does it match your resume: Same paper? Same typestyle?

You will want to keep copies of your cover letters in your portfolio. As you change careers you will appreciate having the samples available.