**COVER LETTER NOTE**

Whenever you send your resume out to an employer, you should always send an accompanying letter that explains why you are contacting them. This letter is called a cover letter. (Send a cover letter even when faxing.)

If the employer receives a resume without a cover letter, he or she may be asking him or herself. “Is this person applying for the advertised position?” or “Does this applicant wish for me to keep this resume on file in case an opening occurs in the future?” Basically, the employer would like to know why he or she is being contacted.

You can answer these questions in a cover letter. In one typewritten page, you tell the employer what position you are applying for, how you qualify, and why you should be considered for the job. It also gives you a chance to point out your best qualities.

Following are some general guidelines for writing cover letters, a sample format, and an example e of an effective cover letter.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES**

1. **Make It Short!** – 3 to 5 brief paragraphs - an executive summary of relevant information
2. **Make It Personal!** – Address the reader by name and title, unless otherwise stated, this is usually the person who has the authority to hire.
3. **Make It Researched!** – Briefly refer to the organization’s goals and / or needs, to show that you have done some investigation.
4. **Make It Focussed!** -Study the job responsibilities and qualifications, then pull relevant details from all your experiences (whether on your resume or not) to support your application.
5. **Make It Interesting!** – Show your enthusiasm and uniqueness in a warm but professional manner.
6. **Make It A Request For Action!** – Repeat you interest in the position, and ask for an interview
7. **Make It Perfect!** – Make absolutely no mistakes, typos, or smudges; have someone else proofread it to double check.
8. **Make It Eye Appealing!** – Unless otherwise requested, type or word process your cover letter, using the darkest , sharpest- reproducing printer you can find (laser printer);use white, off white or cream coloured paper only, no pastels.

**Resource: www.nextstep.org**