



In addition to the resume and portfolio, come the components that serve as the more conversationally intimate aspects of your professional growth, namely being the cover letter and interview etiquette. The cover letter is the first time an employer or part of your interest is going to “hear” you as an individual outside of the more structured language of the resume, and should be a short but telling introduction into you as a worker, as a collaborator, and as a personable individual. Similarly in interviews, in which the main point is to assess the relationship between yourself and the company or institution of interest, you should utilize the opportunity to be investigative and inquisitive, in addition to merely highlighting your assets and nodding fervently at the interviewers who are questioning you. ■

## THE COVER LETTER: STARTING IT OFF RIGHT

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**HIRING MANAGER NAME**  
**COMPANY NAME**  
**COMPANY ADDRESS**  
**CITY, STATE, ZIP**

*keep that same header!*

*set that letter up right!*

#### PASSION:

*I have spent my entire education working with my hands and getting closer to physical products of architecture, always tinkering and crafting. When I discovered your need for a prototyping assistant I knew where I needed to be...*

#### ACCOMPLISHMENT:

*In all my years of working, I have been considered by my colleagues as the one who fixes the leaks, constantly streamlining project teams, and serving to improve the efficiency of the team every step of the way...*

#### INTIMATE:

*Last year, I had the fortune of speaking to members of my community about the pain of losing their home, and I knew forever after I needed, through my work, help provide housing for those who can be able to afford it...*

#### PERSONALITY:

*Have you ever been staring at a screen for so long, wondering about what you could possibly do or say to get your point across that it takes a spilled cup of coffee in your lap to jolt your thinking in a new direction? For me, discovering this practice was the jolt that accomplished that for me...*

The coverletter is after all, well a letter, so make sure your heading addresses that format. **Its always better to address the Hiring Manager directly**, or if he/she cannot be found attempt to specify the department or team rather than “to whom it may concern”. In terms of writing and getting those jitters out of the way, perhaps read through the companies website to get a sense of their own writing style so that you can reflect in your own writing. Additionally try to think of writing to someone who already holds you in respect and and thinks fondly of you (this helps make you sound more personable and conversational, rather than robotic and overly filtered). Also make sure your contact info remains in the header just as the resume (in fact make the headers identical).

In effect, with the coverletter you want to **create the space where the person of your concern gets a sense of your passion, your personality, your discipline, your ability, and of course your qualifications**. So with your first sentences attempt to start off by using a power statement to set the tone. This can either be a **passion statement, an accomplishment statement, an intimate statement, or a personality statement** (humorous or witty) but be careful with this last one, as while it can be more noteworthy, it can do so for the wrong reasons as well. ■

## KEEP IT SHORT AND STRONG



The coverletter should be rather short, so utilize your words wisely and be concise. Try to target 3/4 of the page as a good length. For the content, **focus on specifically what you plan to bring to the table of the position at hand**, rather than using overworked, vague and fluffy phrases such as “I work well in groups” or “I work hard”. Instead of these **make sure what you want to say about yourself is reflected in your past experiences** in more tangible ways, similar to the resume, but less formulaic. It is always best to individually tailor the cover letter to the company you are addressing, as more personal or passion statements can be reflective and sensitive to the work you admire, giving the hiring department good sense that you have invested interest and commitment to their cause. **Speak about what moves you to passion and how what you enjoy is reflected both in the work you have done but also they people you wish to meet**. Call to attention to what they want, and how you can achieve success based on how you have succeeded in the past. Be mindful in this not to come across as too pompous or arrogant, as this will backfire and make you sound self reverential and unappealing. Speak humbly and conversationally, and make sure to cap it off with a pleasing Sincerely and a personal signature! ■



# 02B

# THE INTERVIEW: VOICE...

Well damn you made it to the interview! You have battled through the countless tweaks to your professional documents, faced the demons of your past projects and had the willpower to reformat and tell your best story, and have intrigued those you are addressing through your coverletter. Now is the time to meet face to face and set foot in the space you most hopefully wish to occupy after this date. So walk in there and knock em dead.

## SOME QUICK HELPFUL INTERVIEW TIPS: SELLING YOURSELF

### 1. DRESS TO IMPRESS

You act how you look, and you want to look good when people see you for the first time. As anachronistic as it may sound, first impressions are indeed everything. So lets get past the bohemian windblown chic and tighten up. Gents, get some work slacks, nice shoes, a fitted shirt with a snazzy tie and blazer. Ladies, nice pants and fitted blouse with a blazer with some svelte shoes also does the trick, but a fitted plain dress would do just as nicely.



### 2. REMEMBER/RELAX

Everyone gets a little jittery before they head in to the daunting "interview chamber" with these strangers who hold the fate of your employment in your hands. But take a reality check for a moment and realize this: the reason you are here is because those interviewers have taken a fancy to you and already in a way "want more", so while it may seem intimidating at first, recall that you are simply walking into a room with people that really just want to sit down with you a have a nice chat. Also just be open to being chummy.



### 3. SHOW AND TELL

I mean this beyond the basics and the grunting sound of acknowledgment. Be prepared to showcase your extended works and respond to questions as your interviewers flip through it. Speak about your experience, your struggles, the process, the accomplishment, the growth you experienced, not just "this is the floor plan" which they can clearly see. Also be prepared to speak clearly and passionately about the place you are interviewing and speak to their philosophies and why you were inspired to put together all this effort to work there.



### 4. ASK QUESTIONS

The interview is not the place to keep quiet. Sure the interviewers are scoping you out to gauge how you may fit, but you are doing this to them as well. Inquire into their office culture, more about their office structure, how keen are they on promoting diversity of experience, what partners they work with to achieve their work, who you would be working under, what are things they as a practice struggle with consistently, etc etc. The more inquisitive you seem the more the people you are talking to know you have some skin in the game.



### 5. GIFT AND FOLLOW UP

Make sure to leave something with your interviewer that, whether that be your printed portfolio or your personal card with contact, etc. After you leave, make sure to follow up with an email to thank them for their time and show your continued enthusiasm of your interest.

