Your cover letter is incredibly important. It’s the chance for you to tell your story, explain why you are interested in the position, describe what sets you apart from other candidates, show what you will bring to the position and employer, and most importantly, is a chance to make your case for why they should hire you. Your cover letter is also your writing sample. Use it to show that you are a skilled, thoughtful communicator. In other words, your cover letter is critical to getting an interview. Here’s what some of Minnesota’s top law firms said they were looking for in a cover letter:

**Format:** Generally three paragraphs

**1st paragraph**
- In your first two lines tell us what position are you applying for
- Why are you interested in us? Show you have researched, show the connection, show you care about us
  - Include if you heard someone from their firm speak, or you saw a case they handled or they do a particular work that is important to you

**2nd paragraph**
- Describe your skills and previous experience that is applicable to the firm
- Don’t limit it to one group, you can include a couple areas to focus on (?)
- Make the connection to the state/region/city

**3rd paragraph:** Closing
- Reiterate, I am a good fit because XYZ.
- Let them know you’re excited to meet them
- You hope to have this chance...

Don’t forget the golden rule of cover letters: show, don’t tell.