A. Creating An Effective Cover Letter
   - You should develop a standard, yet flexible letter.
   - Write with a four paragraph maximum in mind, to hit five key points:
     - Introduction/Reason for your contact.
     - The specific interest you have in this particular employer and its practice.
     - Your interest in and/or ties to the geographic area.
     - Your strengths, attributes and skills that will contribute to the employer’s continued success.
     - Conclusion/resume reference/availability for an interview.

B. Your “Baseline” Cover Letter Broken Down
   - **Paragraph 1**
     - Brief personal introduction.
     - Lead with a strength/attention-getter (e.g., “As a…with…”).
     - Personal connections and/or referrals go here.
     - Apply for the position/opportunity.
   - **Paragraph 2**
     - Ties to/interest in the specific legal market.
     - Reasons why you are particularly drawn to this employer.
   - **Paragraph 3**
     - Focus on yourself, and what you would bring to the position.
     - Tie experiences to tangible, transferrable skills.
   - **Paragraph 4**
     - Reference enclosed materials.
     - Tell reader when you will be in his/her city, or about your availability to interview.
     - Thank reader for his/her consideration.

C. To Whom Should You Write?
   - **If the position has been formally posted:**
     - Send your application to the listed individual.
     - You may send a separate letter to other individuals with whom you “connect.”
       - Reference that you have already applied through the proper channels.
       - You may state an interest in speaking with them further.
   - **If the position has not been posted:**
     - Send your application to the designated recruiting coordinator or member of the hiring committee, if listed.
     - You may send a separate letter to other individuals with whom you “connect.”
       - Reference that you have already applied through the proper channels.
       - You may state an interest in speaking with them further.
   - **If the position has not been posted and there is no clear point of contact:**
     - Send your application directly to an attorney, with this suggested order of priority:
       - 1st – Fellow Duke Law/undergraduate alumnus or other attorney with whom you have a “connection.”
       - 2nd – Lead attorney in your practice area of interest.
       - 3rd – Name partner or other senior person within the organization.