

Covering Letter

The background features a series of fluid, overlapping lines in shades of purple and white, creating a sense of motion and depth against a solid black background. The lines are most prominent on the left and right sides, curving and flowing across the frame.

Why you need a good covering letter

- Before even looking at your CV, an employer usually reads your covering letter.
- If it is badly-written, or untidy, or difficult to read, your CV will probably go into the nearest bin.
- If it is well-written, attractive, easy to read and persuasive, the employer will turn to your CV.

Your covering letter must sell your CV

- When you send your CV to apply for a position, you should also include a short letter. This letter is called a **covering letter** or (in American English) a **cover letter**.
- A covering letter sent with a CV/resume is also called a **letter of application**. Your letter of application is a sales letter. The product it is selling is your CV.

Content

- The reader of your letter may be busy and unwilling to waste time on unnecessary details.
- You should therefore design your letter to be easy to read.
- It should be short, concise and relevant.
- It should not be too formal or complicated.

Your letter should:

- **confirm that you are applying for the position**
- **say where you learned about the position**
- **say why you want the position**
- **say why you would be a benefit to the company**
- **request an interview**

Format

- The layout of a modern business letter in English is very simple.
- Your address is at the top, on the right or in the middle.
- The rest of the letter can be in 'block' format, with each line starting on the left.
- Try to keep the whole letter on one single page, with plenty of white space.

1 Your address telephone - fax - email

Put your address +
your telephone number,
fax and/or email address
at the top in the centre
OR on the right.

Do NOT put your name here.

1. Your address
telephone
fax
email

2 Date

Do not write the date as numbers only, for two reasons:

- It can be considered too official and therefore impolite
- All-number dates are written differently in British English (31/12/12) and American English (12/31/12). This can lead to confusion.

3 Destination name and address

- This is the name of the person to whom you are writing, his/her job title, the company name and address.
- This should be the same as on the envelope.

4 Reference

- This is the reference number or code given by the employer in their advertisement or previous letter.
- You write the employer's reference in the form: 'Your ref: 01234'.
- If you wish to include your own reference, you write: 'My ref: 56789'.

5 Salutation (Dear...)

A letter in English always begins with 'Dear...', even if you do not know the person. There are several possibilities:

- Dear Sir
- Dear Madam
- Dear Mr Smith
- Dear Mrs Smith
- Dear Miss Smith
- Dear Ms Smith

6 Subject

- The subject of your letter, which for a job application is normally the Job Title.

7 Body - the letter itself

8 Ending (Yours...)

- Yours sincerely
- Yours faithfully
- Yours truly

9 Your signature - sign in black or blue ink with a fountain pen;

10 Your name

Your first name and surname, for example:

- Mary Smith
- James Kennedy

11 (Your title)

- If you are using company headed paper, write your Job Title here.
- If you are using personal paper, write nothing here.

12 Enclosures

Indicate that one or more documents are enclosed by writing 'Enc: 2' (for two documents, for example).

COVER LETTERS

When writing a cover letter, consider the following tips:

- ■ Customize the letter for each job.
- ■ Don't use a generic cover letter for every job application.
- ■ Highlight your skills in bold font that match the job description.
- ■ Make sure the cover letter does not contain any typos or grammatical mistakes.

COVER LETTERS

- ■ List specific examples of things you've accomplished and how each corresponds to the job description.
- ■ Market your strengths, achievements, work ethic, and personality traits that will benefit the organization.
- ■ Ask for an opportunity to interview.

Cover letters are typically written to:

- ■ Respond to an advertisement for employment.
- ■ Respond to a request for your resume.
- ■ Network with contacts during a job search.
- ■ Accompany a proposal, report, or application.
- ■ Respond to a job offer.

Sample

12345 Heartside Drive
Western Branch, GA 31234
December 2, 2011

Mr. Kevin Wilson
President
Videologies, Inc.
10 North Main Street
Atlanta, GA 30303

Sample

Dear Mr. Wilson,

I am very interested in applying for the job of office assistant listed in the Atlanta Constitution on December 1.

As you can see from my enclosed resume, I have worked for both a still photographer and a small video production company. I enjoyed working at both of these companies, and I feel this past experience qualifies me for the position described in your advertisement.

I have a good understanding of the visual medium and the many details you must handle in your work. I believe I can help take responsibility for some of these details with little additional training.

Sample

I would appreciate the opportunity for a personal interview. You can reach me at (770) 555-1234. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Evelyn Boyd

Evelyn Boyd

Encl.: resume