

How To Write A Good Cover Letter

As recruiters we see a significant difference in the quality of covering letters being sent to us on a daily basis. We receive letters with only one sentence, to those that are pages long comprising of the candidate's life story. We decided to collate and share with you, based on our experience, what we think makes an engaging cover letter that will give you the greatest chance of landing your dream role.

First and Foremost Remember.... This is a Letter!!!

In writing a letter to anyone it is important that you lay it out correctly. Your contact details should be at the top of the page, aligned to the left. This first section will include; your name, postal address, telephone numbers and email address. You should then put the sending date and underneath, the relevant reference or job title of the role you are applying for.

You are now ready to write your letter. It is always a good idea to address the letter to the relevant person responsible for the hiring process within the organisation. Always check adverts for names, this shows you have read the advert fully and also you can follow simple instructions. If no name is supplied, you can start your cover letter with Dear Sir/Madame, or Dear Hiring Manager is also a good one to use.

The letter itself should be three to four paragraphs long or approx. one page. It is important to include a closing paragraph; this can include a thank you to the reader for their time and considering your application. You could let them know you are looking forward to speaking to them in the future or invite them to contact you with any questions. Finally sign off with Yours Sincerely as it is unlikely that you know the person you are writing to.

Keep your cover letter brief.

In the first paragraph you should confirm who you are and the job you are applying for. The second should provide an interesting summary of why you should be considered for the role, disclosing any key technical skills and similar roles you have worked in that are especially relevant to the job in hand. The final paragraphs should contain specific information that may affect your application, such as; willingness to relocate, your notice period and your availability for interview.

You should be clear and concise, do not waffle and remember this is your chance to shine and to show your personality. We would also advise that you do your research, a cover letter that shows you are familiar with the company you are wishing to join is always well received. Lastly, have a clear call to action, inviting the reader on to your CV.

CV's and Cover Letters are two parts to one unit.

Your cover letter and CV should complement each other entirely. Presentation is key. So use the same formatting, font and font size for both. There should be a logical flow of information between them and together they should make a convincing case for you.

Do not repeat information for your CV.

As recruiters we often see information repeated verbatim from CV's, this is not only frustrating but a waste of time for both candidate and recruiter. A cover letter should be used to show your personality and engage your reader.

Finally.....

There is no right or wrong way to do a cover letter or CV, just as every candidate is an individual, so is every employer. Remember take your time over your cover letter, it's the first impression you are giving to someone and you want it to impress them. Research the company you are applying to, apply your skills to the role, show off your personality and please, please, please check your grammar and spelling, it's amazing how many people don't!!