

Career and Employability Essentials

Cover Letter Guidelines



Cover Letter Example

Your full address - optional
Phone
Email

21st September 2023

Person's full name
Job Title
Company name
Company address

Dear _____, *(find out the name of the person if possible; otherwise Hiring Manager, Sir/Madam is very impersonal)*

I would like to apply for the position of *(Job Title)* which I learned about through ...

OR

I recently (graduated/am studying) a *(qualification name)* where I completed practical projects such as ...

Skills I have developed include ... , ... and ... through experience in I gained confidence in as well as
Additional to this, I am keen to learn and develop my skills in Throughout my studies I have achieved
Personal strengths include *(This whole section should be written in your own words based on your own experience / skills / achievements / strengths).*

I am interested in working for *(company name)* because ... *(give 3 reasons why you want to work for them e.g., the type of work interests you, the clients, the values, the team culture, the location, the training opportunities).*

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would value the opportunity to speak further with you.

Yours sincerely,

(Your name)

A cover letter is a brief letter explaining to an employer:

1. Why you are writing to them.
2. What relevant skills/experience/personal strengths you have that match the job role requirements.
3. Reasons why you are interested in their business and/or that particular role.

Points to consider:

- Always include a cover letter when sending your CV to employers.
- For each job you apply for always write a different cover letter. It is important to tailor your cover letters, so they relate specifically to each job application.
- It is important to make a positive and good first impression.
- Make sure your spelling, grammar and punctuation are flawless.
- Proofread! Always get another person to proofread your letter before sending it to an employer, don't just rely on Spellcheck.
- Save each cover letter you write e.g., "John Doe cover letter – Sales Consultant.doc"

Structure and layout:

- No more than 1 page long with 4 sections. Be brief, specific and to the point.
- Address your letter to the relevant person, not "Dear Sir/Madam". If possible, phone the organisation and ask who to address your letter to.
- Be professional and enthusiastic, but not pushy. Do not beg for a position.
- Use simple, natural language, avoiding clichés, and jargon.
- Do not start every sentence or paragraph with "I".

Paragraph One: *Why are you writing to them?*

- 1-2 sentences – what are you applying for / asking about, why do you want that role?

Paragraph Two: *How do your skills / experience / strengths match the job? (Why you?)*

- 4-5 sentences: Sell yourself! Even if you feel shy, this is your opportunity to tell the employer about yourself.
- Include a summary of your relevant education, work, life experience, volunteering, achievements and personal attributes with examples or evidence.
- Focus on what you have to offer, rather than what you want or don't have.
- Don't waste space saying general things like "I believe I have the required experience for this position".

Paragraph Three: *Why are you interested in their business / that role? (Why them?)*

- 2-3 sentences: Do your research to show your knowledge of the company and industry.
- Comment on something positive about the company and let them know why you would want to work there. You could refer to the company's reputation, culture, values, size, sales record, product/service quality, or other factors that impress you.
- Show how motivated and enthusiastic you are, and how you can fit into the organisation.
- Discuss your personal qualities / values and why the position interests you.
- Include any personal interests or activities that unite you with the company and the work it does:

Paragraph Four: *Closing and thanks*

- 1-2 sentences: Thank them for considering your application. Encourage them to contact you.

Tips!

- Brief is best but be sure to include examples and evidence.
- If you lack some required competencies, try to think of similar transferable skills or experience you may have to bridge the gap.
- Avoid sentences that are too general. Be specific about what skills, experience, achievements, and strengths you bring.
- Don't repeat yourself.