

COVER LETTER TIPS

adapted from <http://www.myfuture.edu.au/>

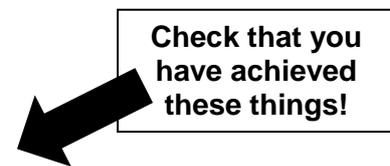
When you are writing a cover letter you should consider how you can best respond to the employer's requirements and how you can present yourself well. The following steps will help you.

- Understand what an employer looks for first
- Keep your covering letter relevant
- Get the tone right
- Show a good attitude.
- Understand what an employer looks for first

If a lot of people apply for this job, the employer may have as little as 30 seconds to decide whether to bother reading your whole application.

In that time they'll want to find out:

- whether you meet the selection criteria
- your experience, skills and qualifications
- your level of professionalism
- clues to your personality
- how well you communicate in writing
- how well you order information in a letter
- how good your grammar, spelling and punctuation are
- how carefully you check for typing mistakes, formatting errors and incorrect information.



Keep your cover letter relevant

Sometimes you can use the same resume for different positions, but never use the same cover letter. Write a unique cover letter for each individual job and company for which you apply.

Focus on what you can offer the employer, not on what you want from the job. Highlight your selling points that are most relevant to the job. Indicate the mix of skills, experience and enthusiasm you can contribute to the company.

Always send a resume to support the information in your covering letter.

Get the tone right

Create a good first impression with your covering letter by doing the following:

Show your best writing skills

Write a rough draft first. This way you can make sure you're including everything you need, and organising your thoughts carefully

Always get another person to read your letter before you send it.

The tone of your covering letter should be:

- professional, warm and friendly
- interesting to read, short and to the point
- enthusiastic and assertive - but not 'pushy', and not begging for the job.
- Use simple, natural language. Be a bit more formal than you would be in conversation, but don't make yourself sound old-fashioned with words like 'aforementioned'. Avoid cliched language that will bore the reader.

Use positive words and phrases such as:

- I have
- I can
- I am able to
- I am capable of
- I am very experienced in...
- I have ____ years of experience.

But don't start every sentence or paragraph with 'I'! Try to limit yourself to one 'I' per paragraph or less.

Show a good attitude

Be honest. Talk straight to your prospective employer. Imagine that you're looking them in the eye as you speak the words you write here.

Don't use qualifying words that weaken your message or make it seem as if you aren't confident in yourself. For example:

- I am FAIRLY experienced in...
- I have SOME knowledge of...
- Although I have LIMITED work experience...
- While I DON'T HAVE FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS in this area...
- I BELIEVE I WOULD BE capable of...

If you don't meet one of the requirements, outline similar skills you have, or talk about work experience that shows you can learn new skills quickly.

Never include negative information, such as areas of work you would rather avoid, personality conflicts with previous employers or sarcastic remarks about your current employer. If you 'bad-mouth' your past or present employer, your prospective one can easily imagine you had-mouthing them in the future.



Dear Sir/Madam...
Dear Potential Customer...
Dear fellow citizen...
Dear friend...
Mon ami...
Hey you gorgeous thing, you...
Dude...