

Cover Letter Tips

Is it worth writing a Cover Letter?

The value of a cover letter is a continuing debate. When you send your CV to a potential employer, there is no guarantee that they will read your attached cover letter – but they might!

In fact, a well written cover letter may be what makes you stand out from the crowd and increase your chances of securing a role.

Unlike your CV, you are able to customise a cover letter to each individual role you apply for. This allows you to not only introduce your background to the reader but also demonstrate that you understand the job requirements and how your skills and experience match these requirements. It is also a good forum to explain to the reader why you are interested in this specific role and why you are enthusiastic about the particular company.

Suggested Format

There is no universal format that should be used when writing a cover letter. Rather, the letter should be tailored to the job itself. We do, however, suggest that you keep your cover letter to no more than 4 short paragraphs.

Firstly, make sure you address your cover letter to the hiring manager. If the hiring manager is not advertised, do your best to find out their details. If you are unable to, address the cover letter “Dear Sir/Madame”.

Paragraph 1: The Purpose

State the role you are applying for and why you are applying for it. Explain the reasons for your interest in this particular company and the role that they are advertising

Paragraph 2: Your background

Now you have stated the purpose of your letter, introduce your education and work history to the reader.

Paragraph 3: Sell your skills

Be clear on the responsibilities of the role. Describe the skills you have developed during your education and professional career and how they relate to the role for which you are applying. Provide examples of achievements and how you can utilise your skills to add value to the reader’s organisation.

Paragraph 4: Closing your letter

Close by reiterating your interest in the job and how the reader can contact you. Confirm your phone number and e-mail address, that they can contact you if you have any questions and that you look forward to hearing from them.

Remember, your cover letter gives you the opportunity to speak to the employer directly. The most important thing is that you tailor the letter to the reader and the role you are applying for.