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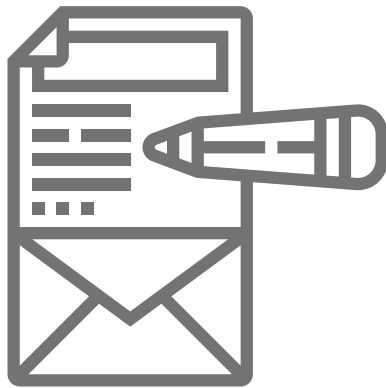
How to:

Write a Cover Letter



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The Importance of Cover Letters

Employer attitudes to cover letters vary:

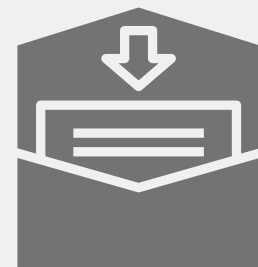
Some employers will read your cover letter before even looking at your CV.

- If your cover letter is not good or interesting enough, they won't even shortlist your application.
- If you do not provide a cover letter they might not get as far as looking at your CV.

Some employers will focus more on your CV and not read your cover letter.

- They will go straight to your CV and get the information they need from there.
- Your cover letter might also be looked at for background information if they find your CV interesting.

As you will not know which attitude a potential employer may have, you should always create a good cover letter.



NB: Cover letters are not used when applying through agencies.

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter 'frames' your application:



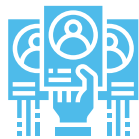
- It allows you to introduce yourself and explain why you are attracted to the job and the organisation.



- It makes the match between your skills, knowledge and experience and what they need.



- It brings together the key elements from your CV.



- It will give them a sense of your personality and an idea of how you fit in their organization.



- You can explain employment gaps on your CV or how you have coped with setbacks such as poor exam results. You can show how you overcame negatives and highlight positive qualities such as determination or persistence.



- It shows you are a serious candidate as you have taken the time to write one.

Length and Format

Your cover letter should be less than one page.

- Aim for about half a page of text for the main body of the letter.
- The rest of the page will be taken up with address, date, signature, etc.



Your cover letter should be properly formatted as a business letter:

- Add your name and address at the top right hand side with the date two lines below.
- Add the employer's address on the next line below but on the left hand side.
- Include the name of the person you are applying to, if possible.
- Include the employer's vacancy reference or job title as they may have several vacancies and you need to make sure your CV ends up in the right pile for the job you want.

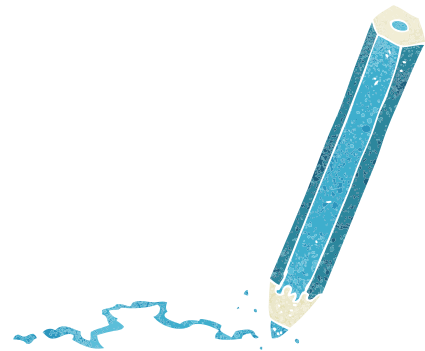
For email applications, add your cover letter as an attachment:

- An attachment can look more professional and formal and ensures your letter will stay with your CV.
- If you write your cover letter as the body of the email, it is more likely to be read by HR but may then get separated from your CV.

Writing Style

Your writing style should be professional

- Use terminology that is appropriate to the organisation and the position you're applying for.
- Check your spelling and grammar carefully. If one of the required skills for the job is 'attention to detail', you can demonstrate this by ensuring there aren't any mistakes.



Try to limit the number of sentences beginning with 'I'

- The word 'I' can become very repetitive after a while. Show you are capable of communicating effectively in writing by using different sentence starters.

Use plain clear language

- Watch out for and avoid clichés.
- Avoid using overly emotional language such as 'passionate about' and 'love to'.

Use powerful words

- Choose words that are proactive and indicate that you have the initiative and ability to make things happen such as; contributed, influenced, negotiated, managed, transformed, etc.

Suggested structure for paragraph 1

Explain what your letter to them is about by including the following;



Give your letter a subject heading - state the job title and reference for the advertised position. For example;

Application for the vacancy of Pharmacy Assistant (Ref: Pharm13)



If your application is in response to an advertised vacancy - say where and when you saw it. For example;

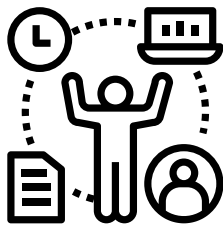
..... as advertised on jobs.gg on 25.09.21



If you are making a speculative inquiry - get straight to the point and explain why you are writing and be clear about the type of work you are looking for.

Suggested structure for paragraph 2

Say why you are a good candidate by including the following:



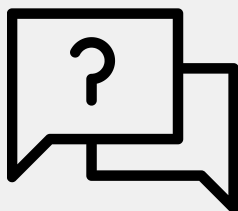
Clearly state how you meet the employer's requirements

- Cover the skills, experience, qualifications, etc. that are mentioned in the job advert.
- Match their words/language where possible.



Refer to the evidence in your CV

- Draw attention to your most relevant skills and experience.
- Do not repeat sentences from your CV, but expand on the information in it.



With a speculative application describe a recent example from your CV:

- Think about what you would expect the employer to be looking for given the nature of their business and the opportunity that you are asking for. how your skills would benefit them and why you want to work for them.

Suggested structure for paragraph 3

Say why you'd like the job and why this particular employer. This could be two separate paragraphs but works just as well with one.

Describe what motivates you and attracts you to this opportunity



- Show that you have a realistic understanding of the role.
- Draw parallels with positive experiences you have already had in a similar role or a different setting.
- Try to show how your previous experiences make this role the logical next step for you.

Say why this organisation appeals to you



- Use your research to explain what appeals to you about the organisation.
- Try and find something that is unique to them.
- Don't waffle or make it up.
- Focus on real reasons as you may be asked about them in an interview.

Suggested structure for paragraph 4

End with a positive conclusion:



A brief summary of your positive attributes and share your enthusiasm and positive attitude. For example:

"With more than 3 years experience working with the Head Gardener, I'm confident I can lead your gardening team and develop inspiring designs for your clients. I'm very excited to hear more about this role, and to share with you why my current boss calls me indispensable."



It is appropriate for you to express your expectation of a reply. For example:

"Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you in due course"



If applicable, indicate when you are/are not available for interview.



Include your **contact details** such as email address and phone number.



Always sign off your letter and include your full name underneath your signature. For example:

Yours sincerely/Best Regards

A cursive handwritten signature that reads "Jonathan Matthews".

Jonathan Matthews

Review your Cover Letter



Check each section and every paragraph of your cover letter thoroughly for any grammatical, spelling or typing errors. Make sure you have the correct spelling for names and addresses.



Get at least one other person to read through your cover letter. When you have been reading the same words over and over, it is hard to spot a simple mistake.

Your ESO can help you with this.



Make sure that the information you have put in your cover letter is relevant to the information provided in their advert or job description. Do not be tempted to waffle or include irrelevant details.



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**Our aim is to support disabled
and disadvantaged people to secure
and maintain work in Guernsey.**

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Promoting Inclusion