

COVER LETTERS

The covering letter is an essential part of the application process and many employers consider it to be as important as the CV or application form. It is a way of introducing yourself to the recruiter and generating interest in the skills and experience you have to offer them. It also allows you to show a little more of your personality and enthusiasm for the role than would otherwise be possible in a standalone CV.

A strong covering letter is structured around a number of key areas; each adding further weight to your application.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The purpose of the first paragraph is to put you firmly in the running for the job and to clearly state your reasons for making contact. You should also mention that you've attached a copy of your CV or have included a completed application, in case either goes missing.

If you are responding directly to an advert, state the source (newspaper name, website address, job board name etc), the date the role was advertised and any reference numbers provided. If on the other hand, you are writing a speculative letter to an individual, indicate where you got their name and detail the assistance, advice or information you require.

WHERE YOU ARE NOW

Section two should briefly outline your current situation and indicate your reasons for seeking a change. You will ideally include details about your current or last job and relevant qualifications; tailoring this information to fit the requirements of the role.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER

This section should clarify what you have to offer and why you are the right person for the job. You will need to highlight your transferable skills, achievements and versatility; show where you can add value and underline what makes you different. Mention any personality traits you have that are relevant to the role; reference how they have made a difference in your career so far and how they can again.

When completing this section in response to an advert, read the ad carefully and make sure your skills respond to their requirements. You should also take account of any comments made by recruiters or recruitment consultants that clarify the skills required for the role.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Tell the potential employer a little about their organisation to demonstrate you have properly read the advert and that you have done some research. This shows your commitment to working with them and that you haven't taken the time to consider why you want to do so.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Make sure to close your letter with a polite expression of interest in discussing the role further – mention that you would like the opportunity to talk about your suitability at interview and that you await a response in due course.

[↑ back to top](#)