

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 requirements
 3. Reasons why you are interested in their business and/or that particular role
- Always include a cover letter when sending your CV out to employers.
 - Always write a different cover letter for every job you apply for. It is important to tailor your cover letters so they relate specifically to each job application.
 - It is important to make a good first impression.
 - Make sure your spelling, grammar and punctuation are flawless.
 - Always get another person to proof read your letter before sending it to an employer.
 - Save each cover letter you write e.g. "John Doe cover letter – Sales Consultant.doc"
 - Practice writing a cover letter for an actual job vacancy or organisation. (Trying to write a cover letter with no actual job or company in mind is like trying to write an assignment with no subject).

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 the letter to.
- Be professional and enthusiastic, but not pushy. Do not beg for a position.
- Use simple, natural language, avoiding clichés and expressions like 'aforementioned'.
- Do not start every sentence or paragraph with "I".

1

Why you are writing to them

- 1-2 sentences – what are you applying for / asking about?

2

How do your skills / experience / strengths match the job?

- 4-5 sentences: Sell yourself.
- Include a brief 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.
- Don't waste space saying general things like "I believe I have the required experience for this position".

3

Why are you interested in their business / that role?

- 2-3 sentences: 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.

4

Closing and thanks

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

TEMPLATE

Your address
Phone
Email

24th February 2015

Person's full name
Company name
Company address

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

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

1

OR

As a (final year) student doing the *(Qualification Name)* at Unitec I am writing regarding the possibility of an unpaid internship or work experience as an Assistant Administrator *(change this according to the role you would like within that company)* with *(name of company)*.

2

I recently graduated with a *(qualification name)* where I completed practical projects such as ... As outlined in the attached CV, I have developed skills in ... , ... and ... through 2 years' experience in customer service and reception roles. My computer skills using MS Office are at an intermediate level and I have fast, accurate data entry skills. As well as this, I am keen to learn and have achieved good grades in papers such as *(examples of papers completed which you believe are relevant to the role)*. Personal strengths of mine include being highly self-motivated, well organised and I have a friendly and efficient telephone manner. *(This whole section should not be copied, but should be written based on your own experience / skills / achievements / strengths)*.

3

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)*.

4

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

(Your name)

Tips:

- Brief is best.
- Avoid any sentences that are too general. You need to be specific about what skills, experience, achievements and strengths you bring.
- Don't repeat yourself.
- Use examples and evidence.