"*The resume focuses on you and the past. The cover letter focuses on the employer and the future*"

HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER THAT GETS READ

An eye-opening guide that emphasizes the value of cover letter

Table of Contents

1.   Why Do We Need a Cover Letter?

What is the Cover Letter?

The cover letter is a way of:

- Introducing yourself to potential employers
- Explaining why you are suitable for the position
- Employers look for individualized and thoughtfully written cover letters

This is a method of screening out applicants who

- Are not sufficiently interested in their position

- Who lack necessary basic skills.

Cover letters are typically divided into categories

- The application letter or invited cover letter which responds to a known job opening
- The prospecting letter or uninvited cover letter which inquires about possible positions

Why We Need Cover Letters?

The cover letter is the best way to show how motivated you are

- want to start a career in this particular company

- Why this exact position

- Why in this sphere

Some people think that nobody reads the cover letters

- The cover letter is a meaningless requirement
- Such people believe that strong CV and rich experience is enough
  - In some companies this could be true, but in the best employers this is great mistake

- If a cover letter is requested
  - Be sure it will be read
  - At least at a glance

What We Gain from Cover Letter?

In the most prestigious and well-structured companies the cover letter is very important

The human resources (HR) team at the company definitely reads it

If the cover letter is impressive

You will be immediately contacted and invited to an interview

Even if your experience is not great

Cover Letters: Remember

It is always worth to send a well-prepared and impressive cover letter

- Especially written for exactly this company and exactly this job position

Never "reuse" your cover letters

- A good cover letter for certain company and job position is in most cased bad cover letter for another position

Cover Letters: Beware

If you apply for a second time in given company

- Be sure to rewrite your cover letter
- Most good companies will disregard your application
- The same cover letter means that
  Your motivation has not changed
  Your qualification is not changed

The HR Will Research You

Be sure that the HR professionals will try to find all the information about you they can

- They will search in Google about you
- They will try to find your Facebook profile
- They will try to find information about you from current employees

2.   <u>Template-Based Cover Letters</u>

Template-based Cover Letters

The best way to guarantee a failure when applying for a job is to use a template-based cover latter

Once we received a really bad cover letter like this:

'Dear ..., I would like to apply for Your Company because I am skillful and highly enthusiastic candidate. I want to grow in Your Company, to improve my knowledge and skills. Your company is the best and I want to be part of it. I am hard worker and I am sure I will help your business to grow."

When using a template for cover letters

- You say nothing about why you want exactly this position in exactly this company
- How your experience in the past will help you do exactly this job
- Why you really match the requirements from the job offer

- Phrases like "Your Company" are always a bad idea!
- Once we received a cover letter starting with "Dear ..." (with three dots left from the template)

3.How to Write a Good Cover Letter?

A Good Cover Letter :

- Shows that you apply exactly for this company, not some other
- You are interested in this particular company and this particular position
- Not just searching for some job
- Shows you have a clear idea of the position
- What are your future responsibilities, etc.
- You match the requirements
- You have the required skills and abilities

What is a Good Cover Letter?

I. A good way for writing a cover letter is to read

- About the company
- About the offered position
- The requirements stated in the job offer
- The detailed job descriptions

II. Write 1-2 sentences matching the requirements

- Not directly
- Not exactly in the order as in the job offer
- Not exactly with the same words and phrases

Example Job Offer Requirement

Examine and analyze the technical documentation of competitors

I.   You could write for example that

In my previous job I had to read a lot of technical documentation and that I believe that I will be able to find, read and analyze various types of articles, documents, manuals, etc.

- Don't use this sentence in your cover letter
- Say it with your words, matching your experience and skills

II.   If you don't have similar experience, say for example that

I like to read blogs and articles and I know that technical documentation is different but it should also be interesting and challenging.

- Use your own words

III.   It is a bad idea to write:

I am very good in examining and analyzing the technical documentation of competitors.

IV.   How you prove this?

- What are your arguments?
- If you are not good in something
- Just skip writing about it
- You can't say you are good at something without any arguments
- How you know you are good in this
- Just describe it

Matching the Requirements

I.   Given the following requirement:

excellent communication skills

II.   You could write that

I believe I have a sense of communication because I had organized a small technical seminar at school and at the university where I needed to contact the speakers, arrange the seminar venue, invite the attendees, attract sponsors, etc.

III.   This could never be used as a template

- It depends on your past experience, interests, skills, personal character qualities, etc.

Bad Ideas

I. Example of a bad way to match the requirements:

I have excellent communication skills.

II. This sound like

I am 18 years old and I have very rich experience in professional project management in large teams.

III. Saying something without arguments is always a bad idea

- Either argument well your statement or just don't talk about it

Who to Address in the Cover Letter?

I. This is a common question
II. It is best if you can research who will be reading your cover letter

- That way you can address it directly to them
- It is risky
- You can misspell the name

Dear Svetlin Nikolov and Training staff,

III. If you don't know the exact person
- Write 'Mr./Mrs.', 'HR Manager', etc.
- Something more common

4.Lying in Cover Letter

Do You Really Need to Do It?

I.   Never Lie!

- Example:

I have 10 years of experience with Silverlight.

II.   If you lie in your CV or cover letter

- You will be caught at the interview and your eventual interview will end very soon
- Write in the cover letter something matching
- The requested requirements
- Provide valid supporting arguments

Validate your Arguments

I.   You could prove that you match certain requirements either

- By showing similar experience
- By saying you have read about this in the past
- By sharing that you have a friend who always talks to you about this
- You explain you want to learn this, you had read an article and watched a video tutorial

II.   Always use valid arguments and never lie

- If you say you are ..., find supporting arguments

III.   Another example:

I am a hard-worker

IV.   How you prove this?

V.   You could say that

... at the university I always have high grades because I always come very well prepared for the exams ...

VI.   or better explain that

... when an important work is waiting, I cannot sleep until I get it done ...

VII.   Use valid arguments based on past experience

- Not only work experience, but general

5.Don't Make Mistakes

(Spelling, Punctuation and Formatting Mistakes)

Mistakes

I.   When writing your CV and cover letter, use a spell checker

II.   Don't make spelling mistakes, punctuation mistakes, etc.

- MS Word, Google Docs and the other text processing applications have very good spell checkers
- Just use them

Formatting Mistakes

I.   Format your CV and cover letter well
- At this point you can use templates
- Just type "CV template" or "sample cover letter" in Google and you will find lots of examples
- Be sure to use only the styles, layout and formatting from the best examples you find
- Never use the text inside

II.   Some companies use an automated software to find if your cover letter is template-based
- Be sure to write it entirely in your words

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Wish you all the very best!

Don't forget to share this with your friends

Cheers

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