

English for Business

Chapter 6

Effective Cover Letters (Part 1)

Lecturer: Lerissa Daniela, S.S., M.Pd.

Effective Cover Letters (Part 1)

1. Identifying features of cover letters
2. Beginning a cover letter
3. Writing the main body of the letter
4. Writing an effective final paragraph
5. Using appropriate language

Identifying features of cover letters

1. What's the difference between a CV and a cover letter?
2. Have you ever written a cover letter in English?
3. What did you write in your cover letter?

Audio: Writing a Cover Letter

Vicky Tang is the Communications Manager at Green Pharmaceuticals. She wants to change her job and phones her friend, Felix, a recruitment agent, for advice on writing a cover letter.

1. The length and structure of the letter
2. The language you would use
3. The content of the letter



What is a cover letter?

A CV gives information about the educational qualifications and professional experience you have, whereas a **cover letter explains why you want the job**. A cover letter should **compliment, not duplicate, your CV**. The main purpose of a personalized cover letter is to **persuade the reader to read your CV and consider you for the vacant position**.

A cover letter is often your earliest written contact with a potential employer, **creating a critical first impression**. A well-written, well focused cover letter **demonstrates your written communication skills** and will help you to get that all-important interview.

The letter of application should follow the general guidelines for all business letters. It should have an **introduction, a main body, and a final paragraph**.

Cover Letter: Dos and Don'ts

1. Use high-quality paper that matches the paper of your CV.
2. Ensure that your cover letter is written using formal language.
3. Use the same cover letter for every application.
4. Show that you have done some research into the company you are applying to.
5. Emphasize your suitability for the post.
6. Enclose copies of your educational qualifications and certificates.



Cover Letter: Dos and Don'ts

1. Use high-quality paper that matches the paper of your CV. **DO**
2. Ensure that your cover letter is written using formal language. **DO**
3. Use the same cover letter for every application. **DON'T**
4. Show that you have done some research into the company you are applying to. **DO**
5. Emphasize your suitability for the post. **DO**
6. Enclose copies of your educational qualifications and certificates. **DON'T**

Jane Nuttall
71 Lambert Road
Brixton
London
SW2 5XL
jane.nuttall@kcl.ac.uk
1 December 2008

b → Ms Diana Allsopp
Recruitment Manager
McClure and Company
Russell Square
London WC1C 9SE

c → Dear Ms Allsopp,

1 I am a final-year student at King's College London reading Economics, and would like to apply for an Associate Consultant position with McClure and Company, as advertised on www.monster.com. ← d

2 Management consultancy appeals to me because it combines analytic research across a wide range of business situations with frequent client contact. I recently attended a McClure and Company workshop run by Charlotte Penton-Smith, and she gave a very positive impression of the company. I was particularly impressed by the excellent in-house training programme which she described, and I would welcome the opportunity to work in such a close-knit team of supportive colleagues.

3 During my time at King's College I have employed a variety of different research methods, and am familiar with the analytical applications of spreadsheets. For example, for my recent dissertation, I used Excel to compare the effects of tax increases on alcohol and tobacco consumption. In addition, when I was working at the Williton branch of Costcutter over the summer, I presented suggestions for improving the layout of the store to the regional management team. They decided to put these ideas into effect and sales rose by 7% over the autumn quarter. ← h

4 During my free time, I sing in and manage a jazz band, arranging concerts and gigs and managing the band's accounts. I very much enjoy collaborating with a team of people with similar interests and working towards shared goals. I am also learning Italian by attending weekly evening classes and studying on my own towards the A-level exam next June. ← i

5 I enclose a copy of my CV and hope very much to be invited for interview.

l → Yours sincerely,
Jane Nuttall
Jane Nuttall

Parts of Cover Letter

1. Give you contact information and current date.
2. End 'Yours sincerely' and type your name under your signature.
3. Give a clear context – say who you are and why you are writing.
4. Your sign-off should be friendly, polite and to the point.
5. Point out your aptitude for the sorts of skills they are seeking.
6. Name any employee you have met and say why they impressed you.
7. Your use of leisure time can show you are a well-rounded person.
8. Support your claims with evidence, focusing on results and achievements.
9. include the name, title and full address of recipient.
10. Mention where you saw the job advertisement.
11. Explain your motivation for applying.
12. Show your acquiring additional useful skills.

Parts of Cover Letter

1. Give you contact information and current date. **(A)**
2. End 'Yours sincerely' and type your name under your signature. **(L)**
3. Give a clear context – say who you are and why you are writing. **(C)**
4. Your sign-off should be friendly, polite and to the point. **(K)**
5. Point out your aptitude for the sorts of skills they are seeking. **(G)**
6. Name any employee you have met and say why they impressed you. **(F)**
7. Your use of leisure time can show you are a well-rounded person. **(J)**
8. Support your claims with evidence, focusing on results and achievements. **(H)**
9. include the name, title and full address of recipient. **(B)**
10. Mention where you saw the job advertisement. **(D)**
11. Explain your motivation for applying. **(E)**
12. Show your acquiring additional useful skills. **(I)**

Beginning a Cover Letter (1)

Advertised | application | consideration | enclosed | enquire | ~~graduate~~ | qualified | recommended | requirements | response

1. I am a final-year student who is about to **graduate** with a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering from Bristol University. I am writing to ... about possible employment opportunities with Mendoza. I am interested in a position related to transportation management.
2. I am writing in ... to your job posting for an investment banker on your company's website. I have ... my CV for your consideration.
3. I was recently speaking with Mr. Fox from your firm and he ... that I send you a copy of my CV. Knowing the ... for the position, he felt that I would be an ideal candidate, given my experience in international sales.

Beginning a Cover Letter (1)

Advertised | application | consideration | enclosed | enquire | ~~graduate~~ | qualified | recommended | requirements | response

1. I am a final-year student who is about to **graduate** with a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering from Bristol University. I am writing to **enquire** about possible employment opportunities with Mendoza. I am interested in a position related to transportation management.
2. I am writing in **response** to your job posting for an investment banker on your company's website. I have **enclosed** my CV for your consideration.
3. I was recently speaking with Mr. Fox from your firm and he **recommended** that I send you a copy of my CV. Knowing the **requirements** for the position, he felt that I would be an ideal candidate, given my experience in international sales.

Beginning a Cover Letter (2)

Advertised | application | consideration | enclosed | enquire | ~~graduate~~ | qualified | recommended | requirements | response

4. I would like to apply for the post of a Commercial Solicitor in your firm as ... on Legalposition.com. As a recent graduate, I was particularly happy to see that the position is open to newly ... lawyers.
5. Please accept this letter as ... for the Marketing Manager position currently listed on Monster.com. My CV is attached for your ...

Beginning a Cover Letter (2)

Advertised | application | consideration | enclosed | enquire | ~~graduate~~ | qualified | recommended | requirements | response

4. I would like to apply for the post of a Commercial Solicitor in your firm as **advertised** on Legalposition.com. As a recent graduate, I was particularly happy to see that the position is open to newly **qualified** lawyers.
5. Please accept this letter as **application** for the Marketing Manager position currently listed on Monster.com. My CV is attached for your **consideration**.

Writing the Main Body of the Letter

Think about the following questions.

1. How long should the main body of the letter be?
2. How many specific points should you make?
3. How will this section change depending on the job you are applying for?

Writing the Main Body of the Letter

1

My past experience of working overseas has brought me a greater understanding of international cultures and traditions, as well as a better appreciation of my own culture. These insights would certainly benefit a multinational corporation, such as yours.

Skills: intercultural awareness / dependability / flexibility / self-awareness

2

Within my role as a project manager, I am responsible for leading a team of five people. We often have to work unsociable hours under difficult conditions. I ensure that team morale is maintained by regularly counselling team members to check they are coping with the demands of the job.

Skills: flexibility / lateral thinking skills / language skills / interpersonal skills

3

Although I do not possess any experience in the hotel industry, I was a Holiday Representative for Xtreme Holidays for two consecutive summers, where I learned that customer satisfaction is the key to success in the service industry. I implemented a new way for customer feedback to be recorded, which helped Xtreme Holidays develop the service that they provide by identifying areas needing improvement. I believe I can apply the skills obtained from my previous employment to this position.

Skills: IT skills / customer service skills / communication skills / initiative

Writing the Main Body of the Letter

1

My past experience of working overseas has brought me a greater understanding of international cultures and traditions, as well as a better appreciation of my own culture. These insights would certainly benefit a multinational corporation, such as yours.

Skills: intercultural awareness / dependability / flexibility / self-awareness

2

Within my role as a project manager, I am responsible for leading a team of five people. We often have to work unsociable hours under difficult conditions. I ensure that team morale is maintained by regularly counselling team members to check they are coping with the demands of the job.

Skills: flexibility / lateral thinking skills / language skills / interpersonal skills

3

Although I do not possess any experience in the hotel industry, I was a Holiday Representative for Xtreme Holidays for two consecutive summers, where I learned that customer satisfaction is the key to success in the service industry. I implemented a new way for customer feedback to be recorded, which helped Xtreme Holidays develop the service that they provide by identifying areas needing improvement. I believe I can apply the skills obtained from my previous employment to this position.

Skills: IT skills / customer service skills / communication skills / initiative

Writing the Main Body of the Letter

4

This summer I worked at Alton Towers Theme park, where I was initially responsible for operating various rides. However, as I can speak both Italian and English fluently I was quickly moved into the gift shop to deal with customers. Working in the shop helped me to learn the importance of dealing with customers in a friendly and efficient way. During this month I suggested changing the layout of some of the gift displays. These changes led to a significant increase in the sales of souvenirs.

Skills: customer service skills / entrepreneurial skills / leadership skills / numerical skills

5

I have a strong history of staff management, working closely with my current team on their personal development plans, and understand my role assisting and promoting staff member success. I regularly seek feedback on my performance from my superiors and colleagues to identify areas I need to improve in.

Skills: reliability / leadership skills / self-awareness / technical skills

Matching your skills and experience to the position

1. Read the job description
2. Identify the skills and experience the company is particularly interested in
3. Show any parallels with previous posts you have held or other experience

Thank you and see you in the 7th session.

Yours sincerely,

Lerissa Daniela, S.S., M.Pd.

Original Source:

The original source of this chapter is taken from the book entitled
“ Cambridge English for Job-hunting”
written by **Colm Downes** and the series editor is **Jeremy Day**.
Published by **Cambridge University Press in 2008**.