

Top 10 Tips to Preparing an Effective Covering Letter

1. **Always send one:** The covering letter is two-fold. The letter explains who you are, the vacancy you are applying for and what you are wanting from the company. It also provides the recruiter with a handy list of your contact details, and a short document detailing some of your key achievements and skills.
2. **Do not rewrite your CV:** It should provide edited, juicy highlights from your CV, and not merely repeat everything your CV includes.
3. **Make an impression:** Do not waffle in the first paragraph, make the reason you are contacting them really clear. Try and sell yourself straight away! Finish your covering letter with a call for action, e.g. request for them to contact you, tell them that you look forward to hearing from them, or tell them that you will be in touch.
4. **Talk about the company:** Do some research into their company and include some information about them in your letter. Specifically tell them what you are interested/impressed by, and what attracts you to working for them.
5. **Provide evidence of your qualities:** Pick out 3-5 qualities that they are specifically looking for in their job advert or specification. These should be things that you have already covered on your CV. Provide some concrete numbers and examples where you can – for example ‘I implemented a new system within my department, which boosted productivity by 40% within the first month of installation’
6. **Reflect your personality:** Ensure that your letter shows that you are motivated and enthusiastic. Do not include negative comments, and try and use positive language at all times. Try and use dynamic verbs for each skill that you explain.
7. **Keep it relevant and concise:** A well-written letter should draw the recruiter to your CV. It is a brief space to illustrate what you are like as a person. It is never more than a page.
8. **Sign it:** Sign your letter, even if you need to do this electronically using an alternative font.

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- A thick blue wavy line that curves across the top of the page, starting from the left edge and ending at the right edge.
9. **Contact details:** Wherever possible, send your letter to a named person. Contact the organisation and find out the named individual, or use the internet to research the company yourself.
 10. **Presentation:** Finally, make sure that your letter looks good. It should be clearly laid out, with no spelling errors. Ask someone to check it for accuracy if possible.