



Writing a good application letter

Here are a few practical tips to help you write a good application letter.

Deciding whether to call ahead	It makes sense to call ahead if anything in the job listing was unclear, or if you want to ask a company about sending in an open application. A phone call will often yield information that proves useful in writing your application letter. Don't call in without a clear question; This tends to provoke irritation.
A personal salutation	Address someone specifically in your letter. If you're not sure who to address your letter to, write or call in first to find out the name of the recruiter or relevant contact.
Punchy opening paragraph	Try to capture the interest of the reader by writing an original, or at least engaging, opening paragraph. Briefly indicate why you're interested in the job. Save your more detailed explanations for the second paragraph.
Active voice	Your letter will be much easier to read if you use the active voice as much as possible. Avoid passive constructions. Don't write "The accounting is done by me." Instead, write "I do the accounting."
The difference between letter and resume	In your letter, you indicate why the job interests you and what you have to offer. Be as specific as you can by offering examples. Don't just say that you are detail-oriented; Show that you are by citing an example. There is no need to list your academic credentials in your letter. That information is in your resume already. It is generally best to avoid quoting your resume in your application letter.
Organising the letter	A letter always has an introduction and always ends with a concluding paragraph. The most important parts of the letter are your abilities and your reasons for wanting this job in this organisation. Be sure to point out how your abilities meet the job requirements. Include details about the experience you bring to the table.
Keep It Short and Sweet	A letter should be no longer than a single sheet of A4 paper. Otherwise, odds are the reader will lose interest before the end. Recruiters receive many reactions to the job openings they post, so a succinct, pithy letter is usually more effective.
Proofread	Avoid language errors! It is vitally important that you carefully re-read your letter. Once you finish the letter, it is best to walk away and do something else for a bit, then return with fresh eyes for proofreading. Or you could ask someone else to read it for you.
Active conclusion	Mention in your conclusion that you would be very happy to discuss your resume and application letter in a personal interview.