

Covering Letter Guide

Version 5.17

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What is a covering letter and why is it important?

Your covering letter acts as the introduction to your application and is your personal sales pitch. Your CV contains the facts, the cover letter is about your motivation and fit for the organisation and role.

You should discuss your interest in the vacancy and the organisation and convey how your skills, abilities and, in some cases, knowledge make you an ideal candidate. You should also indicate your enthusiasm for the opportunity that is being offered.

1. Why you are interested in working for the organisation.
2. Why you are particularly interested in the job/function.
3. What makes you a strong candidate for the job.

The covering letter also enables you to explain anything in your CV that an employer may question, for example, low grades, changing course, time taken out from studying for a degree etc.

Your covering letter is the first thing an employer will look at and if it is poor they may choose not to read your CV. This may sound harsh, particularly after you've spent weeks on your application, but in most cases it is reality. So don't throw all your hard work away by attaching a poor covering letter!

When to use a covering letter

1. To apply for an advertised vacancy

As a general rule, if you are applying in writing for a position that has been advertised, whether it is a graduate or part time job, placement or volunteering opportunity or even a course, you should include a covering letter. Your CV and covering letter are a package and it is important to understand how they work together. When sending an application form you should check the advert to see if a covering letter is also required. If you are sending a CV by email, you should still include a covering letter. See the emailing covering letters section for how to tackle this.

2. Speculative applications

If you are making a speculative application (contacting an employer when no position has been advertised) or networking, it is strongly advisable to send a covering letter. Much of the content will be similar to a standard covering letter although you would need to explain precisely why you are writing to the company and what you want from them. For example, to arrange an information interview or to see if there are any opportunities for work experience, work shadowing etc. Speculative covering letters are dealt with in more detail later in the handout.

Tailor your covering letter

Each covering letter needs to be individually written.

Producing a "typical covering letter" into which you paste the changes in address/company name, runs the risk of making your letter impersonal and you may mistakenly send it with the wrong company name inserted.

Some things will stay the same in your letter - your own details, degree results etc. but you need to tailor it to each organisation and role. Give the right emphasis to the particular skills the organisation mentions and of course your reasons for wanting to work for them.

Format

- Your covering letter needs to be laid out like a business letter. See the examples at the end of this handout.
- Aim to be one page in length.
- The structure should be clear, with each paragraph having a clear theme.
- It should have a beginning, middle and an end.
- Try to find the name of a person to address it to (look online, call the organisation etc). If you are unable to get this, start your letter “Dear Sir/Madam” and finish with “Yours faithfully”. Never start a letter “Dear Sirs” – many recruiters are female and this may not be well received!
- It is usual to address the recruiter formally in a covering letter. The standard text is ‘Mr’ for a man and ‘Ms’ for a woman. When addressing your letter to “Dear Mr. Smith”, finish with “Yours sincerely”.
- If you are instructed to address your letter to “Mary Smith”, never start your letter with “Dear Mary” unless you have spoken with the person before and are sure that this familiarity is appropriate. In this case, finish with either “Yours sincerely” or “Yours truly”.
- Give your letter a title to reflect the subject, e.g. “Job Title/Ad Reference code”. Even speculative letters need a title as it helps the reader understand the purpose of your letter E.g. ‘Work shadowing opportunities’. The title usually goes on the next line after “Dear...” (see examples at the back of the handout). It is important to quote any reference numbers as the organisation could be recruiting for several posts at the same time and it might not be obvious which one you are applying for.
- Proof read your letter and make sure you check for any spelling or grammatical errors. Computer spell checks may not always spot mistakes and typos such as “I dealt with enquiries and angered customers.”
- If you do use a computer spell check and are applying for jobs in the UK, make sure it is set for UK English and not US English e.g. Organisational, and NOT Organizational.
- As your CV and covering letter are a package, make them physically look like a package. Print them on the same type of paper and use the same font for both.

Make sure you spell the addressee’s name correctly – if in doubt, check. Call the company and speak to the person on switchboard (they usually have a phone list in front of them complete with full names and contact details). This also goes for the company name; look out for the unusual use of capital letters and concatenated words e.g. AstraZeneca and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Content

In your covering letter, you need to introduce yourself and explain why you are interested in the job and the organisation, as well as why you are a strong candidate. This should be presented in clear, logical sections that are tailored to the job and the employer. Reading your covering letter may be the first time a recruiter formally “meets” you as a candidate. If you are to progress to interview you must make a good first impression.

Beginning the letter

Introduce yourself to the reader and explain why you are writing. If you are writing in response to an advertisement, you need to mention this and quote any reference code. For example:

- “I wish to apply for the position of “Graduate Analyst” with “Company name” which I saw advertised on your company website, and I enclose my CV for your consideration.”

- "Please find my CV enclosed for the post of "Software Engineer" with "Company name" as listed on the Careers Service website."
- "As a final year geologist at The University of Manchester, I was very interested to see your vacancy for a Geotechnical Engineer on the Careers Service website."

It is important to re-establish any links you have with the person you are writing to, or with the organisation itself. If you previously worked for a company, they may not necessarily remember you, but the fact you worked for them before will be important. (See the examples at the back, specifically Suzanne's email and Sarah's letter). Additional examples:

- "Following on from my conversation with Spike Anderson at the Graduate Fair in Manchester, I am pleased to enclose a copy of my CV..."
- "Two years ago, I undertook some work experience at your office in Bristol, and this led me to study computer science at University. As part of my degree course at The University of Manchester, I have the opportunity to do a 12 month placement in industry, and I am very interested in doing this with your company..."

Tip

If you attend any careers fairs or other employer-led events, always write down the names of the people you speak to in case you need them later (check any unusual names for spelling).

The main body of your letter

There are three key areas of content you must include:

1. Why you are interested in working for the organisation.
2. Why you are particularly interested in the job/function.
3. What makes you a strong candidate for the job.

How long each of these sections should be will vary between applications, reflecting the different reasons that prompt you to apply for different jobs. Employers look out for candidates that demonstrate a clear interest in the job and in their organisation. Using the same covering letter for every application will not have the same impact as one that is carefully tailored to the particular job.

A good tip is to start with what prompted you to apply in the first place, whether it was the organisation or the job role itself. Structuring your letter in this way will allow you to demonstrate your enthusiasm and your letter should flow more fluently and logically.

Demonstrating enthusiasm in your letter is important. Consider what prompted you to apply in the first place, by re-reading the advert or other company literature. Think about all the possibilities, the opportunities, what you could achieve. You should find that your passion is reflected in the language you use in your letter.

Why are you making this application?

It is important to provide convincing reasons as to why you are interested in the organisation and role. For example;

- "I met one of your recruitment team at your company's presentation and the company and its approach to work is just what I'm looking for."
- "I'm looking for a career switch into Advertising and my research shows you are one of the best."
- "I'm have a strong desire to continue in my career as a research chemist and working for XYZ Plc, with its tremendous investment programme in my field of interest, is to me a natural choice."

If you use a summary sentence like this, you need to expand your points later in your letter. For instance, what is it in particular about the company's approach that interests you? Why advertising?

As well as interest, you need to demonstrate an understanding of the job and organisation. Show you have done your research properly and quote your sources. The Careers Service website has useful starting points for your research such as the sector pages.

When talking about your interest in an organisation, avoid stating the obvious e.g. "you are a large multinational firm with 30 offices worldwide". Instead, say WHY that matters to you and what it is about them that makes you want to work for them.

When researching an employer's website, look at the pages that face their clients and industry in addition to the recruitment pages. You may discover information about their corporate culture, clients or previous projects that resonate with you personally and that you can reflect on in your covering letter.

Why are you a strong candidate for the job?

Focus on how your skills, experiences, attributes and knowledge will be of benefit to the organisation. If you have read the job description and done your research, you should have a good idea of where your strengths are as a candidate. However, don't just focus on your selfish ambitions, growth and desire for continuing development. Of course, any good organisation will want all of that to happen for you and for you to be ambitious – but the primary focus is how you can make a contribution to them

Think about your 'unique selling points' - things that make you stand out from other applicants. One approach is to pick your best three-five examples and summarise these in a short paragraph. For example, aspects of any relevant work related activities (e.g. producing publicity materials, organising an event) activities undertaken during your degree and personal strengths relevant to the job.

Summarise each point briefly - don't copy word for word from your CV. Back up claims of having relevant skills with hard evidence.

Look at the example letters at the end of this handout; here are some others:

- "I believe my research project demonstrates my special technical knowledge in this field as well as managing a team against a very difficult timescale and technical difficulties..."
- "My work as Shift Supervisor at Lorenzo's Pizzeria clearly shows I can lead and motivate a team and achieve results. I am confident I can use these skills to make a success of the role you are offering ..."
- "I have strong communication skills, developed from giving regular presentations at university, and also from my role as a Student Ambassador for the Faculty of Life Sciences."
- "Acting as captain on the softball team developed my leadership skills, which were further enhanced by my participation in the Manchester Leadership Programme..."
- "My strong organisational skills were tested when planning the trip to Bolivia to research my Masters thesis. This experience also shows my ability to deal with challenging work environments."

Do not include any new information on your covering letter that is not on your CV. E.g. If you mention relevant work experience in your covering letter, make sure you provide the details in your CV to back this up.

Ending the letter

End your letter in the spirit of expectation, looking forward to the next stage in the recruitment process. Remember to include any practical details regarding limits to your availability such as examinations, holidays, etc. If you are applying speculatively for work overseas then you might have to be prepared to travel to that location. For example, "I am planning to visit Sydney during August and will only be too happy to discuss this application with you then."

Some examples:

- "I look forward to discussing the position with you at interview..."
- "I will complete my studies this September and will be available to start work after this time."
- "I will be unavailable for interview during 12 – 15th January 2013 owing to examinations, but can be available at any other time to suit your requirements."

It can be difficult to know what to write at the end of a letter, expressing yourself in a way that is both upbeat and sincere. You want to appear enthusiastic and approachable, but don't overdo the flattery. One tactic is to imagine you are sat facing the person you are writing to – how would you close the conversation?

You might thank them for your time and reiterate your enthusiasm. Perhaps you would say how you were looking forward to the chance of an interview. Role-play it using your own words and then formalise them on paper.

Using language to make an impact

Throughout your application, using proactive, positive language can create the impression of passion and enthusiasm. Avoid using the "passive voice" when talking about your skills and experiences in your covering letter. This is also referred to as talking in "the third person". The impression it gives is that you were an observer, looking in from the outside, rather than an active participant.

It is important you take personal credit for your achievements so try to be explicit about your achievements and contributions. Using dynamic action verbs and "I" in your sentences will help the reader to be clear about what you personally achieved. Our CV guide contains a list of these dynamic action verbs that you can use when constructing your covering letter.

Remember: recruiters are more interested in finding out the specific contribution you made to the task, rather than the overall contribution of the group. They would prefer to see you referring to your responsibilities and achievements directly so they can give you personal credit for them. See Active language list at the end of this guide.

Disclosing Personal Information

Although the general rule is to avoid referring to "negative" information in your covering letter, there may be situations when it is appropriate to do so. For example, if you are applying to an employer who is strict about A-level results but you have a good reason for why your marks were low (e.g. serious illness during your exams), you may want to mention this in your covering letter.

If disclosing personal information is going to be an issue for you, you can discuss it with a Careers Consultant to plan your best approach.

Disability/health issue

Deciding whether to disclose a disability or health issue at the application stage is normally a matter of personal choice. There might be situations where you want to mention a disability if you require any reasonable adjustments to be made e.g. if you need wheelchair access to attend an interview, but this can be done at a later stage.

If you decide to mention your disability in your covering letter, ensure that you don't make it the focus of your letter but concentrate instead on the relevant skills and experience you have to offer. You may want to highlight particular achievements e.g. successful past employment or voluntary work and/or strategies related to your disability.

For further advice on how and when to disclose a disability see our guide 'employment support and advice on disclosure for disabled students' available in the Careers Library or online:

www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/startingpoints

Writing a speculative covering letter

Organisations offering graduate recruitment schemes and internships have formal application procedures. Opportunities with other types of employers may not always be well advertised or advertised at all. One way of trying to obtain an opportunity from this type of organisation, is by submitting a speculative letter or email, along with your CV.

Here are some tips:

- Write to an appropriate person. If you are writing to a large organisation the Managing Director won't have time to deal with your enquiry, but if you write to someone in a junior position they won't have the authority to help you. Instead, aim for someone who is involved in recruiting staff, for example the head of the division you would like to work for. You could also write to the Human Resources department, if there is one, but be aware that they tend to only deal with advertised vacancies.
- Try to find out the name of the person you should write to.
- It should be clear why you are writing so explain what type of opportunity you are looking for e.g. you want some work experience in marketing and would like to help the organisation improve their brands presence on Facebook. It may be appropriate to explain how much commitment you can offer and outline your availability e.g. working one day a week on Thursday, Friday or Saturday. Explain why you are interested in the organisation, and what you can offer in terms of your skills, abilities and knowledge.
- Speculative applications MUST be tailored- an email or letter that reads as if it has been sent to a number of employers won't be given serious attention.

Emailing a Covering Letter

Most applications will be made via email or an online form. Always follow the instructions but if you are applying speculatively you could consider whether postal or email applications will have more impact.

- Email is easy to reply to but it is equally easy to delete.
- A covering letter and CV arriving through the post can make a nice change, but may sit on a desk gathering dust.
- A further option is to try both methods: post a CV and covering letter and several days later email your CV mentioning that you've also posted it.

1. Don't simply put 'please see attached' in the body of the email and leave it at that. Treat the email as you would a covering letter. If you are both posting and emailing your CV, you could 'cut and paste' the text of your covering letter into the email (miss out the addresses and date).
2. Use the email subject field to explain the purpose of the email, e.g. 'Work Experience Enquiry - Postgraduate Marketing Student, The University of Manchester.'
3. Generally, it is better to include the covering letter as an attached document rather than in the body of an email. It is likely that your application will be printed out and more than one person will be reading it. Use your judgement on this but if in doubt, send it as an attachment.
4. Use a professional email address.
5. Remember that not all email systems are the same - you may be able to format the email message but it may not come out looking quite the same when it arrives! Stick to a simple format and avoid placing headings in the centre of the email, using italics, bold text etc.
6. If you haven't heard anything within around a fortnight, follow-up with a phone call. Before ringing prepare what you want to say. This needs to be concise e.g. 'Hello, I'm Chris Plant, I'm a student/recent graduate of The University of Manchester and recently emailed/sent you my CV. I'm phoning to check that you have received it.' If you have met a representative at a careers fair, for example, mention this. If they are responsive be ready to explain your interest in their organisation, and any relevant skills and experience that might make them interested in you.
7. Expect to write to a number of companies/organisations and don't lose heart if you're not lucky first time.

Further help

- Careers Service website for further advice on covering letters:
www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/applicationsinterviews/cl
- The Applications Advice service is a useful way of getting feedback on your covering letter. Ask for details at the information desk or look on:
www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/applicationsadvice
(Limited availability each day, The University of Manchester students and graduates only)
- Careers Service Guide – available each year from the Careers Service.
- Prospects website:
www.prospects.ac.uk/links/coverlet
- CV & Application Forms Guides – available for takeaway from the Careers Service or to download from our website.
- Check CareersLink for information about workshops and events on applications:
www.manchester.ac.uk/careerslink

Don't forget – if you have a question about any of our resources or need advice you can always ask the information team in the Atrium or by phone 0161 275 2829.

Example Covering Letters

Please note all of the following are fictitious examples. Do not copy them, use as guideline only.

- Example 1: Undergraduate internship covering letter
- Example 2: Graduate scheme covering letter
- Example 3: Graduate scheme covering letter (international student)
- Example 4: International student for Tier 5 visa
- Example 5: Speculative covering letter
- Example 6: Speculative covering email

Example 1: Undergraduate internship covering letter

Oak House
Fallowfield
Manchester
M14 6HX
07711111111

www.linkedin.com/in/loiskaplan

Big Night Out Ltd
36-40 Cleveland Street
Manchester
M13 9TP

30th September 2017

Clearly outline your personal interest in the job and company. This applicant demonstrates her knowledge of the company and relates the job back to her

Dear Sir/Madam,

Undergraduate Internship with Big Night Out Ltd (Ref: 59)

I am in my second year of study for a degree in Management & Leisure at The University of Manchester and read with great interest about the current marketing internship at Big Night Out Ltd., advertised on the Careers Service website. I am strongly attracted to a career in marketing within the leisure industry, as I immensely enjoyed studying how to market events during my degree.

I am really enthusiastic about working for you as you were recently voted the North West's premier event management company by readers of City Life magazine. I find the prospect of contributing to a firm which organises events that are so highly regarded within a competitive industry truly appealing. I enjoy playing sports and am very interested in the marketing of professional sporting events (I see this as an important area for growth within the industry). I noted that this internship offers an exciting opportunity to drive-up attendance at non-match day events, at Northern rugby league clubs; it is another reason why I am so passionate about this particular role.

As you can see from my CV, I can offer relevant skills and experience. Last September I was voted Social Secretary for my Hall of Residence Association, working as the lead organiser for the summer ball, advertising the event on Facebook and Twitter. I also marketed 2 BBQs, and 5 environmental awareness events, writing marketing copy for the hall newsletter and designing flyers, which I distributed across the hall. I have also worked as a university Open Day Assistant, touring prospective students around the campus promoting facilities and courses. I am confident I could use these writing and verbal communication skills to work on online and informal promotional campaigns at your company.

In my university career to date, I have achieved excellent grades and hope to graduate with at least a 2:1. Participating in tutorials and group presentations has enhanced my influencing skills and The Manchester Leadership Programme module increased my experience of working in a team, and led to me volunteering for a local cancer charity as an administrator. Logging donations to the charity improved my ability to work quickly and accurately which would be an asset when updating the client record database and organising mail outs at Big Night Out.

I strongly believe that I have the skills and enthusiasm to make a success of this internship and look forward to the opportunity to discuss this with you further.

Yours faithfully,

Lois Kaplan

Highlight your unique selling points, relating skills and experience back to the role requirements. Lois points out her main strengths which creates impact.

Example 2: Graduate scheme covering letter

10 Radcliffe Highway
Withington
Manchester
M15 90P
07711111111
www.linkedin.com/in/sarahtemple

30/09/2017
Falcon Aircraft
205-208 Skyway Hangers
Manchester
M15 5WD

Dear Sir/Madam,

Trainee Graduate Engineer Opportunity

Why do you want to work for this company in particular? Reasons should be specific, not general such as “you are one of the best in the industry”. This shows lack of research and knowledge of the company. What makes this company different from the other ‘top companies’?

I am in my final year of a MEng Aerospace Engineering degree at The University of Manchester and am writing to apply for your graduate engineer training scheme. I heard about Falcon Aircraft through attending a presentation on campus and after meeting your representative, Matthew Turner, I was convinced I wanted to work for your company.

I am passionate about having a career in the aerospace industry, as I’ve really enjoyed my degree and am eager to build on the technical and leadership skills I have gained. I want to work specifically for your company because I am impressed by the structure of your graduate scheme; the opportunity for rapid career progression, guidance from a corporate mentor and support in gaining professional qualifications will enable me to achieve my professional goals and contribute as effectively as I can to Falcon Aircraft and the wider aerospace engineering industry.

I can offer skills and experience which meet your requirements. I gained commercial experience when I undertook a year in industry working for Airways Ltd., assisting on a new engine design project. During my degree I developed practical and technical skills and an understanding of aerospace design. I used my problem-solving, team working and creativity skills in individual and group projects and presentations.

From my CV you will notice that my overall degree mark was a 2:2. I transferred to the University of Manchester to study Aerospace Engineering after my first year at Hull University studying Maths. I had to cover first year and second year work during the year and I found it a challenge to manage my increased work load. However, during my final year, I was able to improve my time management skills and achieved a good 2:1 for the year, including a 70% mark for my dissertation project on engine design.

I hope that my genuine enthusiasm for this opportunity comes through and you are persuaded that I have the skills to make a strong contribution to Falcon Aircraft. I am available for interview at any time, and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Temple

Explain anything that an employer is likely to question in your CV, such as low grades. Turn a negative into a positive as much as possible, showing how you have learnt from the experience.

Example 3: Graduate scheme covering letter from an International student

Fairfield Hall
Manchester
M60 7LH
Kato.ade21@gmail.com
Tel: +44(0)7443151465
www.linkedin.com/in/katoadewali

ABC Tax Services
23 Manchester Street
Manchester
M1 1BC

August 10, 2017

Dear Sir or Madam

Re: Client Relationship Manager, Institutional Investor Group

ABC Tax Services are well-known for its expertise in tax services, the use of innovative techniques and technologies, being a responsible and highly rewarded institution, often named as one of the best in its category, providing high quality services to its clients. As a consequence, I would be extremely glad to join your team in London as it would be the perfect position towards a challenging and rewarding career in the tax services industry.

After having obtained a bachelor's degree in finance and accounting with excellent results, I decided to supplement my education abroad with a master's in International Business and Management. My academic curriculum gives me a wide range of competencies, not only managerial with strong negotiations skills but also technical and analytical in market finance, corporate finance and asset management. In the academic context, I have often been granted the role of team leader, which strengthened my team spirit, project management skills as well as my competencies in dealing with pressure and deadlines. I also had several professional experiences for international financial firms such as AXA, Banque de France or Deloitte. By working closely with asset managers, senior financial consultants and European regulators, these opportunities enabled me to gain core and complementary knowledge about the finance industry that I can directly apply in your company. I can conduct quantitative studies, build innovative strategies or lead meetings in an international context to cater to the specific needs of institutions and clients, in a challenging and fast moving environment. I am driven, energetic and have the passion for delivering results. I am confident I can make a valuable contribution to your existing team and contribute efficiently to ABC Tax Services daily challenges.

I am able to work full time on a fixed term contract, for up to four months from the date I submitted my dissertation (5th September 2015) without additional visa requirements. I will receive my degree result in mid-late November and will then have the option to apply for a sponsored working visa in conjunction with an employer who is on the Sponsor Register. If I apply before my student visa expires, there will be no need for a labour market test by the employer. An introduction to working visas for international graduates can be found on The University of Manchester's career webpages for employers at: <http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/international/ukworkafterstudy/> The official government site is: www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/working It is my ambition to establish my career in the UK and to settle here in the long term.

With rich academic achievements and several professional experiences that gave me a strong knowledge of the tax services industry, I would now like to join a universally recognised institution, in a rigorous and dynamic team. I will be available to start in your services in September 2017. Thank you for your time and your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours faithfully,
Kato Adewali

Example Cover letter 4 – International student for Tier 5 visa

Small to medium sized employers may be unfamiliar with VISA restrictions. You may want to provide a concise explanation.

Fairfield Hall
Manchester
M60 7LH

Kato.ade21@gmail.com

Tel: +44(0)7443151465

www.linkedin.com/in/katoadewali

ABC Tax Services
23 Manchester Street
Manchester
M1 1BC

August 10, 2015

Dear Sir or Madam

Re: Client Relationship Manager, Institutional Investor Group

ABC Tax Services are well-known for its expertise in tax services, the use of innovative techniques and technologies, being a responsible and highly rewarded institution, often named as one of the best in its category, providing high quality services to its clients. As a consequence, I would be extremely glad to join your team in London as it would be the perfect position towards a challenging and rewarding career in the tax services industry.

After having obtained a bachelor's degree in finance and accounting with excellent results, I decided to supplement my education abroad with a master's in International Business and Management. My academic curriculum gives me a wide range of competencies, not only managerial with strong negotiations skills but also technical and analytical in market finance, corporate finance and asset management. In the academic context, I have often been granted the role of team leader, which strengthened my team spirit, project management skills as well as my competencies in dealing with pressure and deadlines. I also had several professional experiences for international financial firms such as AXA, Banque de France or Deloitte. By working closely with asset managers, senior financial consultants and European regulators, these opportunities enabled me to gain core and complementary knowledge about the finance industry that I can directly apply in your company. I can conduct quantitative studies, build innovative strategies or lead meetings in an international context to cater to the specific needs of institutions and clients, in a challenging and fast moving environment. I am confident I can make a valuable contribution to your existing team and contribute efficiently to ABC Tax Services daily challenges.

I am delighted to inform you that I have the potential right to work in the UK sponsored on a Tier 5 GAE (Government Authorised Exchange) Visa by (insert sponsoring agency name). The scheme is designed to provide UK businesses with interns to develop their business. The roles must be from 3-12 months in duration, 20 hours or over per week, paid at national minimum wage or above and be of a supernumerary (not part of regular staffing requirements) nature, i.e. not taking opportunities away from the resident labour market. The company does not get involved with any immigration work or application to the Home Office. (Insert sponsoring agency name), as registered immigration advisors, will take care of the whole process. They act as my sponsor during the placement, providing pastoral care throughout the duration. An introduction to working visas for international graduates can be found on The University of Manchester's career webpages for employers at:

<http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/international/ukworkafterstudy/tier5/>

With rich academic achievements and several professional experiences that gave me a strong knowledge of the tax services industry, I would now like to join your dynamic team. Thank you for your time and your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours faithfully,
Kato Adewali

Example 5: Speculative covering letter

5 Hemming Way
Somers Town
London, NW1 5PE
Tel: +44(0)7443151465
www.linkedin.com/in/veronicajackson

Ms Aubrey Fortain
Editor
Looking Good Magazine
1 Northumberland Street
London, WC1A 3BE

30th September 2011

Dear Ms Fortain,

Re: Application for Work Experience

Strike a balance between showing enthusiasm and over doing it. Always back up your “selling points” with an example.

I am a second year History student at The University of Manchester seeking work experience and enclose my CV and samples of my writing.

I have been an avid reader of every edition of Looking Good Magazine since it was first published nine months ago. I would love to make a voluntary contribution to a magazine and business which I enjoy reading and admire so much. I particularly like the ‘Diva on a Budget’ section, which is both witty and informative and, as I’ve discovered to my benefit, well researched! I also learn a lot from ‘Catwalk Talk’ with views from models on what’s in and what’s out. I follow you on social media, something I enjoy doing as I am confident in using Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook & Twitter

I love writing about fashion and regularly write fashion items for the student newspaper, The Mancunian. I’ve also started writing a fashion blog www.missjacksonloves.com and keep up-to-date with fashion news by reading a range of magazines and newspapers and visiting fashion shows and exhibitions whenever I can. I work part-time as a Sales Assistant for Zara and this gives me an insight into the latest trends and styles that different age groups are drawn to, something I think could be relevant to your magazine as I’ve noticed you appeal to both teenagers and women in their twenties.

My ambition is to work as a fashion journalist and I am eager to gain relevant experience to help me achieve this goal. I would be delighted if there were an opportunity to spend time at your magazine, for a day a week over a period of time, or full time for one or two weeks during the university breaks. If this is not possible, I would be keen to hear about any other opportunities you could offer. I am flexible and hardworking and eager to add value to your magazine by volunteering my time.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Be clear about what you’re seeking, but also be flexible.

Veronica Jackson

Example 6: Speculative cover letter as the body of the email

To: jo@eurobridgepr.co.uk
Cc:
Subject: Work Experience Enquiry (follow up from Uni of Manchester talk)

Consider whether to address the person by their first name or title and surname. If you've not met the person it may be safer to address them formally.

Dear Jo, ←

I recently attended your talk on working in PR, which was incredibly helpful, and would like to thank you for staying behind to discuss my interest in working as an Account Executive.

You mentioned that Eurobridge PR occasionally offer two week placements during Easter or Christmas. I am available at both these times and enclosed my CV with the hope that I will be considered.

I am studying Modern Languages and am actually fluent in both spoken and written French, having lived in Lyon for 5 years. I know from your talk that Eurobridge PR have a substantial number of European clients who are trying to increase interest in their businesses within the UK. I believe that my language ability would be an asset to your company. I also work part-time at a solicitor's office, booking client appointments and organising paperwork. My professional approach and organisational skills would enable me to contribute effectively to your work.

The recent article in this month's North West Insider on top PR firms re-enforces my opinion on how professional and well regarded Eurobridge PR are within the industry. I would really value the opportunity to work in such a dynamic and exciting environment.

I look forward to hearing from you and can be contacted by mobile: 07111122222 or email.

Best Wishes

Suzanne Chu

In this example Suzanne has met the person she is emailing and feels comfortable writing "Best Wishes". If you haven't met the person it may be appropriate to write "Kind regards" or "Yours sincerely".

Active Language List

10 words to show... Your personal qualities

Enterprising	Adaptable	Resourceful	Proactive	Experienced
Practical	Versatile	Driven	Hard-working	Dependable

How you work with others

Volunteered	Collaborated	Supported	Facilitated	Participated
Assisted	Mentored	Motivated	Encouraged	Facilitated

You taking charge of others

Administered	Delegated	Supervised	Directed	Co-ordinated
Motivated	Led	Managed	Presided	Represented

How you made something better (don't forget to quantify!)

Improved	Increased	Generated	Saved	Delivered
Resolved	Transformed	Doubled	Edited	Refined

Your information/data handling skills

Analysed	Assessed	Evaluated	Reviewed	Researched
Interpreted	Discovered	Identified	Interviewed	Investigated

How you share information with others

Advised	Coached	Guided	Mentored	Organised
Demonstrated	Trained	Presented	Instructed	Recommended

How you take the initiative

Established	Initiated	Created	Designed	Developed
Devised	Introduced	Volunteered	Launched	Suggested

Your organisation and planning skills

Arranged	Co-ordinated	Organised	Planned	Maintained
Prepared	Scheduled	Revised	Processed	Produced

Your effectiveness in persuading others

Negotiated	Mediated	Persuaded	Presented	Liaised
Encouraged	Promoted	Guided	Influenced	Interviewed

Your achievements and going the extra mile

Volunteered	Suggested	Recommended	Mastered	Nominated
Achieved	Awarded	Selected	Won	Attained

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