

Hints and Tips- Covering Letters

Google returns 39 million links to “Cover Letter Help”. So, there is an awful lot of information, advice and guidance out there for you to access.

To guide you through this maze, here are the fundamental things that we at abintegro think you need to know when developing your CV covering letter.

General

- Always send a covering letter – it is your chance to set yourself apart from others and get the employer to look at your CV
- If you are emailing your application, put the letter text into the email body and omit the recipient’s address and date. You’ll need to grab their attention quickly so make sure the first couple of paragraphs encourage them to scroll down to the rest of the letter and to read your CV
- It should be businesslike and formally presented – see our examples

Style

- It should be no longer than 1 side of A4 paper
- Use a legible font (Arial or Times) with a minimum size of 11 point
- Use clear, positive language – short, simple sentences, short paragraphs, action words
- Address the letter to a named person. Call the company to find out who it should be addressed to, and also check the spelling of their name and their job title.
- Check spelling, punctuation and grammar - also ask someone else to read it to check for errors you may miss
- Always write it from the employer’s perspective – never send a standard covering letter. Tell them how you can contribute to their organisation, not what it can do for you

Content

- “WHY” - the first sentence should make clear you intend to apply for the job. Make sure you include the job title, with any reference numbers. Mention where you saw it advertised.
- “WHAT” – outline what interested you about the organisation and the job and refer to your current situation. Pick the main responsibility from the job description and link it to an achievement within your CV. Tailor it to make it as relevant as possible.
- “HOW” – outline how you could contribute to the organisation, again linking this to the organisation’s aims and your experience/skill.
- “WHAT IF” – Close you letter by explaining what you hope will happen next.