

Cover Letter Myths and Tips

Myth: A cover letter is not as important as a CV/Resume.

TIP: A cover letter is just as important as a CV/resume. Some hiring managers prefer to read the cover letter as an example of a person's ability to communicate in writing. The cover letter can provide a glimpse into the writer's personality and style. Use the cover letter to tell your story and make a connection to the position and organization.

Myth: A cover letter is intended to give a reader an overall understanding of your past.

TIP: Your cover letter should convey very clearly what you offer to the organization you are applying to and how you can meet the needs listed in the job description. If you are writing to apply for an internship and have little (or no) direct experience, focus on conveying a sincere interest for picking the site and what skills or experience you can bring.

Myth: Your cover letter is simply a repeat of your CV/Resume.

TIP: Cover letters are your opportunity to "personalize" your interest, experiences and skills. Avoid repeating accomplishments or experiences but feel free to build on what you introduced in the CV/resume. Make it about the organization and select items that are directly relevant to the position you are applying for.

Myth: What format should you follow to create a cover letter.

TIP: Use the same header as your resume/CV. Avoid fancy fonts and stick to a font size between 10 pt and 12 pt . Use standard margins and make sure it is not less than .5. Focus on the quality of the content.

Myth: A cover letter should begin with the salutation, "To Whom It May Concern".

TIP: Do your best to learn the name of the person who will be receiving the letter. If this is not possible, Try "Dear Hiring Manager" or add the title of the person who is accepting the CV (if you know who that is). Try to avoid the guess work of title and gender.