

CHALLENGE 4

BANG OUT THAT COVERING LETTER!



We understand that writing a covering letter can fill people with dread! We also understand that a good covering letter can make all the difference between being asked to interview, or your CV being kept at the bottom of the pile, so we would always advise you to include one. A good covering letter, coupled with your CV, is a fantastic way to sell yourself to a potential employer.

Here are some of our top tips on how to write a good covering letter:

- **Type up your covering letter.** This will ensure your letter is easy and clear to read.
- **Keep it to one page.** Your covering letter should be succinct and concise.
- **Be Relevant.** Always tailor your covering letter to the role you are applying for.
- **Use clear, business-like language.** Avoid slang at all costs! It's important that your letter reflects your personality, but always make professionalism the priority.
- **Be enthusiastic about the role and make sure this shows in your opening line.** Employers receive several CV's and generic covering letters every week. Make yours stand out and make it clear to the employer that you're excited by their opportunity.
- **Gain knowledge of the company/service and show it off.** Do some research on the role and the company and open your letter with why you want to work for them within this role. You should always try and find out about the company's values or ethos, and reflect this in your letter.
- **Don't just repeat what is in your CV.** Use words that complement the skills you have listed on your CV, rather than just repeating sentences and words.



● **Use real-life examples.** Here's the tricky bit... Pick out the 3-5 key skills or qualities that the employer is seeking from the advert or job description and briefly and succinctly provide examples of how you meet these, for example if they are asking for someone with 'Excellent customer service skills' you could evidence how you meet this by saying; 'As you will see from my CV, I have over three years of retail based customer service experience where it was essential I was able to use my communication, team work and interpersonal skills to generate custom and sales'.

● **Be neat.** Make sure your covering letter is laid out well in neat paragraphs. Your letter format should be consistent throughout so make sure you use the same font size and type on your covering letter as you used on your CV.

● **Are you contactable?** Ensure you include your contact details and that these are up-to-date and accurate. If providing an email address, make sure it's a professional one, and if providing a phone number, always check you've written it down accurately. If this info is already on your CV, no need to repeat!

● **Include a signature.** This will personalise the letter and shows the employer you have taken care and consideration in preparing the document.

● **Proof read.** Check for any spelling mistakes or grammatical errors. Take a break from the letter, then come back and check over it again. Some time away from the computer screen will help you to see the letter with a fresh pair of eyes. Ask someone else to proof read it also.

● **Practice makes perfect.** Lastly, don't let the prospect of writing a covering letter daunt you. Once you've mastered one, you will find writing covering letters easier and easier.

We thought it would be helpful for you to see what a covering letter might look like when completed so we have included an example in the 'Reserves' section of this pack, lettered H

REMEMBER!

There are professionals out there who are on hand to support you with drafting your covering letter, so if in doubt, or if you need support with this, just get in touch with them!

