

Practical application for your cover letter

Modul 1: Job description analysis

- Find a job advertisement from your area of expertise that you would like to apply for.
- Save the job posting as a Word or PDF file so that you can work with it more easily. It will also be available to you later, especially for the interview preparation.
- Now highlight the most important keywords (and look up any unknown words or programs). Look at the job ad from a recruiter's perspective: what is of great importance to the company? What should you make sure to include in your cover letter?
- Highlight the must-have criteria. Do you meet all of them? Which optional criteria can you also contribute to impress the company?

In Module 4, you will learn how these markings help you when writing the main part of your cover letter.

Modul 3: The introduction: What is your motivation?

Find out your own motivation for the job! You can start with one of the following questions. If this does not apply to your situation, formulate your own starting question.

Why are you applying for this job offer?

E.g.: career opportunities offered, identification with the company, new challenges, professional reorientation, etc.

Why did you choose this company?

E.g.: exciting market positioning, interesting tasks for the advertised position, industry, special products, the company's reputation (employer branding), etc.

What is your personal motivation for this job?

E.g.: new challenges, to contribute own ideas, visions/ philosophy of the company, career opportunities, wide variety of tasks, etc.

Modul 4: The introduction: Gathering your own experience.

- Now have a look at your own job advertisement take out the job posting again with your own keywords and highlights from Module 1.1 again. Analyze the job ad.
- Make a list: What are your own experiences with these keywords? Have you already acquired theoretical knowledge on a topic in your studies? In which course? Or do you already have relevant professional experience from an internship, part-time job or permanent work, e.g. in your home country? Sometimes you might have done similar activities in your free time or during a volunteer work that you can mention as well.
- See if you can perhaps address several requirements at the same time through professional stages, such as your studies. Bundle the points together and create a rough outline.

Modul 4: The introduction: Soft Skills

Write one to two sentences for your cover letter regarding one of the following required soft skills from a job advertisement. Alternatively, choose a soft skill requirement from a job posting you are about to apply for.

Remember the W-questions to be specific about your experience.

- a) You are customer oriented.
- b) You find efficient solutions.
- c) You have experience in working in projects.

Modul 4: The introduction: Demonstrate your own experience or competencies.

Now pick an interesting job ad and write the main body of your cover letter. Think about which of your skills / experience are particularly important for the advertised vacancy. Use the W-questions again to formulate your examples as precisely as possible.

Here are a few more questions to guide you:

- In which moment were you able to show your **ability**?
- When did you work with the required programs (e.g., MS Office/ Python)? What exactly did you create with it? Which complex tasks were you able to solve with it?
- How did you deal with **difficulties** or problems? In which moment did you **learn** the most?
- What were your **most intensive experiences** and **greatest successes**?

Reminder: The W- questions

- **When** did you have an experience in which you were able to use the skill?
- **With whom** did you have this experience? For example, did you work in a team or independently?
- **What** was the initial situation?
- **What** were your exact tasks?
- **Which** problems or challenges did you face?
- **How** did you cope with them?
- **Which** results or successes did you achieve?
- **What** did you learn? What is the key learning for you?

Modul 4: The final part

Now write your own conclusion: Summarize your interest and suitability in one sentence. State when you are ready to start and (if explicitly requested in the advertisement) what your salary expectations are. Is the job located in another city? Then mention your willingness to relocate to xxx. Finally, write that you are looking forward to the interview.