

Letter Writing

One has to write letters for a variety of reasons. The letters can primarily be divided into two categories:

- Personal letters
- Official letters

Personal letters are the letters we write to our friends or relatives. The style of writing and language used are different from the one used for official letters as they follow an informal style of writing. Official letters are written for various reasons. Some of the letters that you are already familiar with are: Letter of complaint, reply to the letter of complaint, placing an order, cancelling an order, letter to the editor etc. These letters have to be clear, concise, to the point, polite and easy to comprehend. While writing these letters the purpose has to be stated in clear and unambiguous language.

Here we are going to deal with another type of official letter-A Job Application.

The job application consists of two parts

- Covering letter
- Resume/Bio-data/Curriculum-vitae

A covering letter is written on a separate page a CV or Resume is written on a separate page. A covering letter is an introduction letter. It follows the same format as that of a formal letter. A formal letter format has the following components and appear in the following order:

- Sender's address
- Date
- Name / Designation of Addressee
- Address of the Addressee
- Salutation
- Subject
- Body – Introduction, Content, Conclusion
- Complimentary Close
- Signature / Name of the Sender
- Designation of the Sender

A cover letter is your first introduction to your prospective employer. It is the first step in ensuring that you get shortlisted for an interview. A properly framed cover letter gives a brief description of you while outlining, as to why you are applying for the job and how you plan on contributing to the organization within the framework of the job-description. It does not contain details of your qualifications and experience as that will be covered separately in the CV/Resume.

The letter should begin with a brief introduction of yourself. This should be followed by a reference to your current employment status if any, as well as a

mention of any special skills or achievements. In the end thank them while mentioning when you will be available for joining if selected. The cover letter should not be very long. It should ideally be half a page and never longer than a page. Your cover letter should make you stand out from the crowd but as an employer is going to be flooded with Job applications be to the point. A Cover letter should follow the following format.

- You should mention the date and your contact details on the top left side of the letter.
- Next mention the name and job title of the person to whom you are writing the letter.
- Subject line. For example: Application for the post -----
- Salutation. For example: Dear-----
- In the first paragraph introduce yourself briefly while making a reference to the post being applied for.
- In the next paragraph give a brief overview of your qualifications and experience if any without going into details. Highlight should be on your special achievements and skills.
- In the last paragraph express your thanks while mentioning when you will be available for joining in case selected.
- End the letter with regards and your good name.

