

Writing a Cover Letter

Skills that this session will develop:

Applications and Interviews, Personal Brand

By the end of this session the mentee will be able to:

- Explain why a cover letter is used
- Create a cover letter that will impress employers

Session Preparation:

Mentee to research a live vacancy they are interested in that requires a cover letter to be submitted as part of the application process. If the mentee can't find a live job they currently want to apply for, the mentor should provide a closed entry level role job description from their own company.

Session Plan:

Work through the following activities together.

Begin by ascertaining the mentees knowledge on what a cover letter is and why some employers will insist you submit one along with your CV. Mentor and mentee to then discuss the role and the job description.

- What does the company do?
- What does the role involve?
- What are the essential skills required?

Once the above questions have been mapped out and the mentee is confident discussing their own skill set and how that corresponds with what is essential to the role, they can then begin working on the letters actual content. The below is an example structure that can be used:

- 1st paragraph – opening statement setting out why you're writing the letter. State vacancy you're applying for and where you saw the advert.
- 2nd paragraph – cover why you're suitable for the job, what attracted you to this type of work and the company, and why you are interested in the role.
- 3rd paragraph – highlight any relevant experience and demonstrate how your skills match the specific requirements of the job description.

- 4th Paragraph – Use this closing paragraph to round up your letter and reiterate your interest and suitability for the vacancy.

It may work best for the pairing to focus on creating a 'skeleton' plan with some bullet points for each paragraph for the mentee to take away and flesh out.

Top Tip - A common mistake amongst young people is the use of overblown phrases and getting lost in complex sentences because of misconceptions that it looks professional. Make sure all of your sentences are clear and concise!