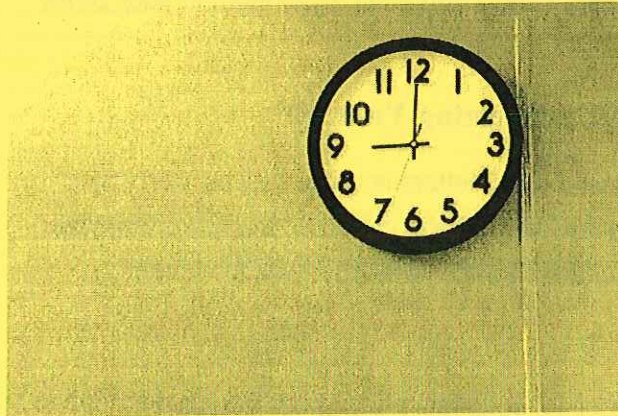


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3 Good Reasons To Spend More Time On Your Cover Letter

October 27, 2014 by Belen Chacon

We've all, in some way, made the mistake of not giving our cover letters the attention they deserve. Some of us tend to regurgitate the information in our resume onto the cover letter. While it's okay – and sometimes even necessary – to include some of the things listed on your resume in your cover letter, **creating a carbon copy of your resume with some added fluff words won't get you anywhere.**

Here are some reasons why you need to **spend more time on your cover letter:**

Writing A Generic Cover Letter Will Label You As A Generic Employee

Not spending enough time on your cover letter can lead to a very generic one – and **the last thing you want to come off as is generic.** According to career writer and blogger, Alison Green, it's important to proofread your cover letter, even if you think it is "perfectly crafted." **Chances are your cover letter might have some common phrases like:** "I'm hard working and a great communicator," "Dear sir or madam," or even "I meet the requirements for the position."

Tip #1: Show, Don't Tell

One of the biggest lessons I took from my creative writing courses at my undergraduate college is to show, not tell. An employer would be a lot more interested if you show them how you're a hard worker instead of simply telling them.

Maybe you've juggled several jobs and school work in the past. You meet the requirements for the position? How so? Listing the **relevant skills** you possess might be a better way to communicate your qualifications.

Still directing your letter to a sir or a madam? Show the employer you care by going out of your way to **find the name of the hiring manager** at the company. Whatever generic phrases you seem to be struggling with, an employer won't know these things about you if you don't show them in your cover letter.

Customizing Your Cover Letter Is A Way Of Customizing Yourself

One of the reasons job seekers tend to write unsuccessful cover letters is because they don't take the time to customize them. **If you're not going to take the extra time to craft a carefully written cover letter, what makes you think an employer is going to take the time to read your generic letter?**

Tip #2: Find The Right Keywords

Morris Associates, Inc, a career and employment website, suggests printing out the job description and highlighting keywords, spending extra time on the highlighted words and thinking about how you can relate them to your skills, and crafting the first sentence "around the essence of what they want." Doing this will set you apart from other applicants and increase the chances an employer will call you in for an interview.

You're Not The Only Job Applicant Out There

According to career and personal branding strategist and author, Jessica Holbrook Hernandez, "on a weekly basis, any hiring manager probably receives... hundreds of resumes and cover letters." So, it's **important to catch the reader's attention from the very beginning.**

Tip #3: Have Them At Hello

Using introductory sentences like: "Please accept my resume for consideration of the (XYZ) position within your organization," isn't a good way to get any hiring manager's attention, Hernandez writes. It's important to note that your cover letter is the employer's first impression of you, "and **nothing is more important than the initial first impression.**" Spend more time on your cover letter and **make sure you don't sound like everyone else.** It's not a waste of time if it has the potential to get you that interview.



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