



*Das Anschreiben, and how to write it*¹

Career Orientation Service

The present document serves as a thorough guideline for the confection of a cover letter. All parts of it will be meticulously described and accompanied by samples of extracts. The advices herein have the purpose of improving the quality of an applicant's letter, however, the content of every letter remains personal and of sole responsibility of the applicant.

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1. The Cover Letter: What is it?

A cover letter, alongside with the enclosed resumé, is the core of all *Bewerbungsunterlagen*. This document offers applicant's the chance to directly speak to potential employers and explain key parts of the resumé in a more detailed and less indirect manner.

It is extremely important that every letter written be unique, that is to say, customized to a specific job opening. The recycling of old letters by a simple change of recipient shows lack of interest and motivation whereas a personalized one maximizes an applicant's chance to seize that job. The letter should be a way for applicant's to stand out amongst the competition and not to blend in, therefore, the writing of such document should be both strategic and creative.

Despite the amount of details contained in a cover letter, the document should not exceed one page and must be signed at the bottom. The following sections will cover the individual parts of a letter.

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2. The Salutation

Firstly, it is important for applicant's to know whom the letter is addressed to. Research the company's background for further information and add a name to your salutation. In case none is to be found, a cover letter may start with the following sentences:

To whom it may concern, or

Dear hiring manager

These examples, however, tend to make a letter sound general and vague. Use them only if an addressee cannot be added.

3. The Opening Lines, or The Grab

The first lines of a cover letter are dedicated to your introduction, showing your motivation and the precise nature of the position you are pursuing. Moreover, it contains immediate information about your strengths and your core competences. This paragraph should grab the reader's attention and assure that the full document will be read. For instance:

With over two years of experience as a tourism officer and travel agency manager, I hereby express my interest in the [Name the Position] at/with [Name the Employer/Company]. I would relish the opportunity to work for the leading travel company in the city and as you may see on the enclosed resumé, my qualifications and international work experience make me a highly suitable candidate for this position.

Not only in the opening lines but also throughout the entire letter, the language used must convey confidence and conviction. The objective of this document is to persuade employers that the applicant possesses the perfect set of skills and experience sought.

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4. The Body of the Letter, or The Hook

Applicant's may use this section of the letter to highlight core points of their work experience, such as successful projects and their respective results. In addition, this paragraph is an opportunity to add information not comprised in the resumé which may be of interest or game-changing.

As once the owner and co-founder of a travel agency and also employee in several international companies, I have gained thorough understanding and knowledge of the tourism industry. In addition, not only am I fluent in six languages but also able to communicate in three different ones. Such skills assure my capability of covering a wide range of functions in several different sectors of your company.

Do not rewrite bullet points from the resumé in this section. Opt for bringing fresh and valuable information to the reader.

5. The Paragraph of Knowledge

This part of the letter, although optional, shows the applicant's understanding of and familiarity with the history and values of the company offering the job. The background research suggested in a previous section should be used here.

The [Company's Name] market share has increased exponentially in the past few months and with the recent addition of bus tours and private car tours the company is prompt to establish its brand of excellency and unique service. With my unpaired set of skills, I would be glad to help [Company's Name] achieve its goals.

Although this paragraph may allude to praise, it establishes the applicant's willingness to continue the company's work and to be integrated into the company's working values and standards.

6. The Close

The last part of a cover letter is a summary of your offers. Demonstrate you are willing to be a part of the company's team and that you will help elevate not only yours but the quality of the services they provided.

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A position in one of your agency would allow me to bring my enthusiasm and experience to your company, while developing my own skills and experience. I can quickly adapt to a new working environments and I am confident that my strong communication and interpersonal skills as well as my foreign background would be an asset to your team.

Applicant's may as well show their interest in an interview or meeting.

I would like to learn more about [Company's Name] and discuss with you how I could make a positive contribution to your organization. I would therefore welcome the opportunity of an initial interview at your convenience.

Finally, insert a complementary close at the bottom and remember to sign the letter.