

Application Forms, Cover Letters and CVs

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It's your future.
How far will you take it?

Introductions

Objectives of Session

- To give you guidance on the various components of an application.
- To give you hints and tips on how to write a strong cover letter and CV.
- To provide you with guidance on what you can do right now to manage your career for the future by taking **CONTROL!**

Agenda - Application Forms

1. Application Forms

2. Cover Letters

3. CVs

Application Forms

Purpose of Application Forms

- Transparency
- Ability to compare like with like

Overview

- Several sections to be completed:
 - Personal details
 - Education and academic results
 - Work experience
 - Competency questions
- Most online applications allow you to save your application and finish it at a later stage.

Application Forms

Points to Remember

- Always consider the job criteria when completing applications - should be specific to the organisation and position you are applying for.
- Copy all questions into a word document before copying and pasting into your application – check your spelling and grammar.
- Have someone review your application at least once before you submit it.
- Make sure you answer the question asked.
- There will usually be a limit on how much you can write to answer a question so focus on key points.
- Keep a copy of your application for future reference!

Agenda - Cover Letters

1. Application Forms

2. Cover Letters

3. CVs

Cover Letters

Purpose of a Cover Letter

- Your cover letter is your first (and best) chance to make a good impression!
- Your cover letter should complement, not duplicate your CV.
- It entices an employer to read your CV.

Types of Cover Letters

- Job specific
- Speculative cover letters



Cover Letters

What makes an effective Cover Letter?

- Your cover letter should be specific to the organisation and position you are applying for.
- Relate your skills and experience to those noted on the organisation website and in the job posting.
- An effective cover letter should explain the reasons for your interest in the organisation and in the job or area you are applying for.
- A clear, concise layout.



Cover Letters

Layout (see sample handout also)

- **Body of Cover Letter**
The body of your cover letter lets the employer know what position you are applying for, why the employer should select you for an interview, and how you will follow-up.
- **First Paragraph**
The first paragraph of your letter should include information on why you are writing. Mention the position you are applying for and where you found the job listing.
- **Middle Paragraph(s)**
The next section of your cover letter should describe what you have to offer the employer. Mention specifically how your qualifications match the job you are applying for.
- **Final Paragraph**
Conclude your cover letter by thanking the employer for considering you for the position. Include information on how you will follow-up or how they can contact you.

Cover Letters

Always Remember

- Always write a cover letter!
- Your cover letter may make the difference between obtaining a job interview and having your CV being ignored!



Agenda - CVs

1. Application Forms

2. Cover Letters

3. CVs

CVs

Overview

- Your opportunity to “sell yourself” through your skills, experience and achievements.
- Tailor the look of your CV to the job you are applying for.
- Take time to really think about what particular employers want, and how you will be an addition to their organisation.
- It is important to highlight to employers the qualities you have which they require.



CVs - Layout

- In all cases, keep the layout of your CV clear and simple.
- Your CV should cover all the important facts about your education, employment history, skills and achievements.
- Length of your CV should be 2 A4 pages (on average) on plain paper.



Template CV (see handouts)

NAME

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Address:
Telephone Number:
E-mail:

EDUCATION

Dates: From - To **College Name**

College Course Name
Expected Degree Result
Final Year Subjects
Overall result per year
(i.e 2nd Year – 2.1, 1st
Year – 2.1,)

Dates: From - To **School Name**

**Leaving Certificate (or
equivalent)**
Overall Points
Subject/Level/Result

WORK EXPERIENCE

Dates: From - To **Job Title**

Employer Name **Key Responsibilities**

- Clear and specific bullet points of your roles and responsibilities.
- Keep points brief and to the point.

Dates: From - To **Job Title**

Employer Name **Key Responsibilities**

- Clear and specific bullet points of your roles and responsibilities.
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SKILLS

- This section can include your key skills that are relevant to the role and company you are applying to.
- These can include skills such as team working, problem solving, leadership ability etc.
- Make sure to back these up with specific and concisely written examples.

INTERESTS / ACHIEVEMENTS

- This section should include a list of interests or hobbies which you may have.
- You may outline here also any achievements you may have had.

REFERENCES

Referee Name
Referee Title
Referee Address Line 1
Referee Address Line 2
Phone:
Email:

Referee Name
Referee Title
Referee Address Line 1
Referee Address Line 2
Phone:
Email:

CVs - Summary of Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Target your CV for every job you apply to.
- Include all relevant information about your education, work experience, skills and achievements that show employers that you have what they need for this job.
- Check your spelling and grammar!

Don'ts

- Write long paragraphs – instead focus on key points, employers spend 2 minutes on average reading a CV.
- Include irrelevant information – focus on the most pertinent information.

Questions...



Take Control of Your Career

- **C**reativity
- **O**wn your career
- **N**etworking
- **T**ry different things
- **R**isks
- **O**ptimism
- **L**ife Long Learning

"Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right!"

Henry Ford (1908)

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