

# Career Advice Part 1:

## Application Letters

Application letters introduce you and your CV to a recruitment consultant or potential employer. Such a letter should contain three distinct parts:

1. Introduction: why you are writing
2. Statement: what you have to offer
3. Conclusion: when is it going to happen

### 1. Introduction to why you are writing

The first section should clearly state the reasons why you are making contact.

**Adverts**

If it is an advert, state the source, i.e. the newspaper name, Internet or other, the date that it was advertised, the job number and reference number, if provided.

Examples of the first paragraph in a letter of application are:

"Following our recent conversation, I am writing to express my interest in the position of X that was advertised on you're the Healthcare Republic site on 13 June 2005."

The purpose of this first paragraph is to clearly put you in the running for the job you have applied for. Busy recruiters handle a number of positions with similar titles at the same time, and advertise these on similar dates. The first paragraph should give you a fighting chance for the job by at least getting your application into the right pile.

Before responding to advertisements, you should - if it is appropriate - contact the owners of the job or the recruiters who are managing the recruitment assignment. Written advertisements give you a clear indication of whether you should be making personal contact or whether the job owners or recruitment firm would prefer an email or hard copy of the application first off.

### Speculative Contact

If you are writing to a surgery, PCT or company on spec, you should indicate that you have specifically identified this organisation for a reason. You need to obtain the reader's attention, either through referring to something about them you've identified in your research or by utilising your networking conversations. For example: "Following the article in yesterday's GP newspaper, I notice that your PCT has been awarded the teaching status. My career to date has been built around successfully supplying such tutoring services and I wondered if I could help you with my expertise."

### Personal Contacts

If you are writing to an individual, you should indicate the source of where or who you got their name from and you need to indicate the help, advice or information that you are seeking from them:

"Your name was given to me by Dr Fred Smith as somebody who may be able to help me with my next career move."

## 2. Statement of what you have to offer

The second section of your letter should clarify what you have to offer as the appropriate person for this particular job.

### Advert

In preparing to write the second section, you should read the advertisement carefully and identify the selection criteria in the advertisement. You should also be guided by conversations that you have had with recruitment consultants or company recruiters, so that you clearly understand what they think is important in the role. They often give you extra clues that are not in the advertised media.

How you express this section is up to you. For example, you might be more comfortable with the succinct:

"I believe I am ideally suited to this role because I have over 15 years experience in as a GP, suitable qualifications and have managed a surgery etc, etc"

Or you may prefer a bullet-point format, for example:

"I believe I am ideally suited to this role because:

- I have 15 years experience as a GP
- I have suitable qualifications in X specialty

### Speculative Contact

The second section of a speculative letter should relate your previous career experience that would be useful to the company you are targeting:

"As you can see from my enclosed CV, my career for the last 10 years has involved the setting up and successfully running of surgery X"

### Personal Contacts

The second section of a personal or networking contact should relate to the skills experience or aspirations that relate to the information you wish to ask from them:

"Enclosed is my CV from which you can see that I have gained a lot of experience providing healthcare to X area. Dr Fred Smith told me that your surgery specialises in providing services in X area, and I was wondering if you have ever thought of expanding into minor surgery?"

## 3. Conclusion: when is it going to happen

In concluding your letters, express your interest in the job and provide any particular contact details that are important, for example:

"I look forward to discussing this application with you in the near future. I can be contacted on XXX (mobile number)."

Another example might be:

"I would welcome the opportunity of discussing this application with you in greater detail in the near future and will be available for interview at a mutually convenient time."

If the role you are applying for will require you to be proactive and chase things up, another conclusion to your letter could be:

"I will call you next week confirm you have received my details and I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have about my suitability for the role."

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### **Example of Letter**

Your Address

Telephone Number (s)

E-mail address

Recipient's Name

Job Title

Address

Dear (name)

Para 1. Why (Start with their need. The more research the better).

Para 2/3. What (Summarise what you are offering. Be interesting).

Para 4. When (When is going to happen).

Yours sincerely

Print your Name

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