

## CAREERS PLUS RESOURCES: COVER LETTERS TRANSCRIPT

### Slide 1: Create the right cover letter for trade job opportunities

No audio

### Slide 2: Introduction to the course and overview

Hello and welcome to Tradeswomen Australia's "create the right cover letter for a trade job application" resource. Creating a letter can be pretty overwhelming if you're not sure how to approach it, what to write and whether you've hit the mark or not. So, in this resource we'll be taking you through an introduction to cover letters - what are they and why do we need to provide them? Once you understand the what's and the why's, we'll then go on to providing an overview of a cover letter, it's contents in detail. We'll then give you a few hints and suggestions on how to really make your cover letter stand out from the crowd, and the kinds of things that trade employers are looking for. We'll also show you some great examples of cover letters that you can take away. In between the information, we'll get you to complete a few activities to make sure you've picked up on key information, and to help you feel more comfortable in preparing a cover letter. Remember we're here to help you if you're stuck, so we've provided our contact details as to how to best get in touch with us to receive assistance in producing a cover letter. Let's get started!

### Slide 3: Cover letters - what are they, and why are they needed?

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### Slide 4: What are cover letters

Cover letters are an important part of the application, essentially covering your resume. Think of cover letters as the wrapping around a gift. You can either decide to wrap the present with thought and attention, wrap it hastily or decide not to wrap the gift at all, and give it to a loved one. The employer is the person you're giving your gift to, and the first thing they see is the cover letter. If they can see that it's well written, structured and presented well, they will be eager to read your resume, contact you and find out more about you. So - it's up to you, you can create a thoughtful cover letter, hastily put it together, or not bother at all.

A cover letter allows you to introduce yourself to the employer in a quick, concise way without the necessity of scanning through pages of unnecessary information. They're all about quality over quantity. You might want to tell the employer a lot about yourself, your skills and experiences that all meet the criteria, but if the letter is quite long it won't necessarily mean you'll reach interview stage, in fact, sometimes it puts off an employer when they have to read so much. A great cover letter is only one page long with a couple of paragraphs. You need to get straight to the point very quickly, and think carefully about how you're going to construct the letter.

### Slide 5: Why cover letters are needed

Whilst not all applications require more than a resume, cover letters are now big in Australian workplace culture. Employers usually receive many, many applications, and therefore prefer a cover page they can quickly scan through to see whether the applicant fits the criteria.

Cover letters give you the opportunity to demonstrate to the employer what you can bring to the role that's valuable, the qualities that are a good fit for what they need or want, the skills and experience that meet the criteria, and why you want to work for the organization. It also allows you to show a bit of your personality, your unique qualities and talents that capture their interest, as well as your passion for your trade and for the position.

### Slide 6: A few rules to follow

There are some general rules to follow when you're creating a cover letter.

The first one is to ensure it's no more than one page, unless you're an academic or executive.

This means that you want to aim for around 250 words minimum or 500 words maximum.

You also need to ensure that it's in letter format. That way all the information is arranged in a professional and understandable manner for the employer to refer to.

Let's look at a cover letter layout so you understand what formatting is required.

### Slide 7: Cover letter format

So this is a generic cover letter example.

- First, you need to include your information: your name and contact details such as your address, email and/or mobile number. You might even want to include your LinkedIn information if you have a profile.
- Second, you need to provide a date as to when the letter has been completed.
- Third, you need to include the employers information - the contact name, company name, address, email address.
- Third, you need to include what's called a salutation or greeting.
- Next, you need to include the title of the position.
- Your first paragraph will be about introducing yourself to the employer.
- Next comes the central paragraphs where you will be demonstrating your skills and strengths against the selection criteria.
- Next comes the final, closing paragraph and then the sign off.



***Please complete Activity 1.***

### Slide 9: Cover letter contents

No audio.

### Slide 10: Personal greeting and introduction

Start with greeting the employer. The recommendation is to use "Dear (name)" or "To (organisation)". It's better not to use "to whom it may concern" - it comes across as stuffy, outdated, and that you haven't looked at the information properly or haven't reached out to confirm who to make out the application to.

It's preferable that you refer to the position description to confirm the contact name, or you might even want to call the organisation and confirm who you should address it to.

You then want to let them know why you're applying, and why you're the right fit for the position. Be clear and concise in your wording.

### Slide 11: Central paragraphs

This is where you need to hit the selection criteria targets. Look at each of the requirements, dot point examples, and then start structuring sentences from there.

Reread your information against the criteria again - is your information relevant to each set of criteria? Are there better examples? Do I need to restructure the paragraph to make it read more smoothly and concisely?

### Slide 12: Final paragraph and sign off

Repeat what you will bring to the company if hired, and why you're a great fit for the role. Once that's done, complete the paragraph with what's called an action statement, such as you will call them in the next few days to confirm that they received your application successfully, and confirm whether they had any questions for you. Or you may simply choose to tell them that you look forward to hearing from them soon, and to contact you if they wish to confirm any points or arrange for an interview.

Sign off with sincerely or faithfully. Use sincerely if you do have the contact name, and faithfully if you do not have a contact name.



***Please complete Activity 2.***

### Slide 14: Tips, tricks and examples

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### Slide 15: Tips and tricks

Want to make your cover letter stand out? Here are a few key points that come straight from trade recruiters and employers:

- Make sure you tailor your cover letter to a specific job you are applying for instead of using a generic one – employers and recruiters can tell the difference!
- Go on to the organisations website and find out more about the company, their people, values and mission. You'll learn much more about who you might end up working for, as well as whether your unique qualities match up with what they are looking for in an employee.
- Think about the value that you'll be bringing to the job that other applicants might not have – particular talents, work experience and other items that you feel would be perfect for the role.
- One particular quality trade employers are looking for is commitment, especially if you are an apprentice. They will be investing in you, and therefore want to know you are willing to invest your time and energy in them and the role long term.
- Let them know when you can start if you're successful – you might need to provide notice to your current employer, or you may be able to start immediately. Make sure you refer to the position description, as trade employers usually specify when they want recruits to start working with them.
- Make sure you place some key words in there that have been used in the position description. You can highlight words in the position description, and utilise them in your cover letter. The employer or recruiter might be using an Applicant Tracker System (or ATS) to go through multiple applications – using key words improves your chances of passing this check.
- As previously mentioned, wrapping up your application takes effort and thought. So make sure you put aside quality time to create and go through your cover letter. Make sure you also read through it to ensure its structured well, and check for any spelling mistakes.
- If you want to impress and show that you really want the job, follow up the application with a phone call.

### Slide 16: Example

Here is an example of a trade application cover letter provided thanks to Indeed:

- We'll take a look at the introduction section of the cover letter. They've correctly provided their personal details, but they've just forgotten to include the date above this section. They've provided their first name, family name, their location, their phone number (you would usually provide a mobile number), as well as their email address.
- Below this you would usually include the details of the person and company you're applying to, so don't forget to include this.
- Now let's move on to the salutation. They've correctly provided "Dear (first name, family name), and it's great that they've been able to obtain this information.

- Just below the salutation, we would need to provide a title such as Re: Application for Apprentice Cabinetmaker position.
- Moving on to the introduction paragraph, they've correctly introduced themselves, and they've confirmed that they want to apply for this particular position. They confirm why they want to go for the position (it aligns with their values), and also confirm their long term goal of becoming a professional cabinetmaker. This is a really important point to make to the employer, as they are looking for commitment from the person they hire. They also express their excitement at the opportunity of working with the company, which is great.
- Moving on to the central paragraph, they've included information about their current training and education, along with their skills and experience built from training, which is great. They've also included the specific skills that they've picked up, which are pertinent to the apprenticeship.
- Moving on to the final paragraph, they reiterate why they want to work for the company and also why they are the perfect fit. They've done a great job at performing some background checks on the company, and confirm that their values align. They also include a quality that they believe would be a good fit with the company's mission or vision. It would be good to provide some more qualities and traits in this section that align with key words appearing in the position description
- They move on to provide an action statement, which is basically that the ball is in the employer's court! They are going to wait for the employer to contact them for an interview.
- As a sign off, they've used kind regards. As it's a cover letter, and they've been able to obtain the name of the person they're applying to, they should use "sincerely". If you cannot find the details of the person you're applying to, use faithfully.
- So this is a great example of a cover letter – there's a few key items missing, and with a bit of tinkering and inclusions, it would become a standout cover letter for an apprenticeship position.

#### Slide 17: Templates

There are some great cover letter templates available online to download, or you might even choose to use a Microsoft Word template. Here are some recommendations:

- [Seek](#).
- [Youth Central](#) (Victorian Government).
- [Job Jumpstart](#) (Australian Government).
- [myfuture](#) (State Governments).

#### Slide 18: Resources

We also recommend having a look at some great resources provided by the government and trade organisations:

- [Australian Apprenticeship Pathways](#) have an entire article on resumes, cover letters, and key selection criteria,
- NECA Education & Careers have published an article full of resume and cover letter tips and tricks, and
- Finally, employment website Indeed have written a guide on how to write a cover letter for an apprenticeship role.



***Please complete final activity, Activity 3.***

#### Slide 20: Finale

Thank you so much for completing this cover letter module. We hope you found it really valuable.

Tradeswomen Australia's recruitment team are here to help you in every step of the way to finding the perfect trade career. If you need any advice or assistance in preparing a cover letter, or anything else relating to trade careers, drop us a line – [careers@twaus.com.au](mailto:careers@twaus.com.au) – and we'll



book in a time and date to chat with you one on one. All the best in applying for your next trade job!