



IFSA Capacity Building Workshop

Session 1: Applying for Opportunities

Lisa Prior



Curriculum Vitae - The basics

The basics

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 - 2 pages maximum if you have less than 5 years experience!
- Your **name** and **contact details**: **Clear and easy to find!**
- Most up to date information first!
- Most important info first!
- It is not relevant to the position you apply for? ✘ Delete it!
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Curriculum Vitae –Structure I

Personal information

- Name
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- *Date of birth* ✘ Debatable if age can also be discriminatory
- *Picture* ✘ Depends on context: In Germany always; in the US never, International both ok!
- *1 Sentence personal statement*
- *Key achievements* ✘ Short list of key Qualification, experience, research topic etc. Can also be at the end.
- *Irrelevant: Marital status, name and occupation of your parents...*
(*can be needed in some countries but not common international*)

Work experience

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Don't include your part-time babysitting job in school; unless you apply to work with kids.



Curriculum Vitae –Structure II

Education and training (If no full time/relevant work experience Education list first)

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Content

- Difference motivation vs. cover letter
- Motivation letter
- CV
- Other parts of an application
- Special - Applying in IFSA



Cover letter vs. Motivation letter vs. Letter of Interest

What google tells us:

- cover letter, is written in response to an available position, a letter of motivation only inquires if there is a job and expresses a desire to work with the company in future.
- A cover letter technically refers to the *accompanying letter* you use when applying for a job, while a motivation letter is for applying to university or a non-paid position.
- A **letters of interest** is to let a prospective employer know that you're interested in working for the organization.



Cover letter vs. Motivation letter vs. Letter of Interest

Cover letter

When responding to a job advertisement

Goal: Why are you the perfect candidate?

Needs to cater to the job you are applying for.

Motivation letter

When applying to University, Volunteering...

Goal: Why are you the perfect candidate?

A little less formal and longer, *maybe*.

Letter of Interest

When applying in an “unsolicited application”

Goal: Why are you a perfect addition to the company?

No specific job, so needs to show more personal motivation.

What is it you bring AND what is it you seek?



A little survey with colleagues

1) What is the first thing you look at in an application?

- If many CV (pre scanning for qualification)
- Otherwise, letter (first few paragraphs)

2) What weighs more to you in an application the motivation letter or the CV (or recommendations etc.)?

- Undecided!
- Motivation letter for personality and to balance weak CV.
- CV may be the first sorting criteria (many applications)

3) Things that really bugged you in applications (Don'ts) you have reviewed?

- Letter: Too long and uninspired, copy & past, overly motivated and unrealistic

4) 1-3 things that positively surprised you in applications (Do's) you reviewed?

5) Anything else you wish young applicants would consider/know about?



A little survey with colleagues

3) Things that really bugged you in applications (Don'ts) you have reviewed?

- Overall: Repetitiveness, Poor spelling and grammar, Irrelevant information, no letter at all, Can't find the contact details on first glance
- Letter: Not addressing the requirements of the position, too long and uninspired, copy & past, overly motivated and unrealistic
- CV: Too long (max 2 page!)

4) 1-3 things that positively surprised you in applications (Do's) you reviewed?

- Innovative CV design (but still structured!)
- Making use of links to more detailed information (LinkedIn; research gate)
- Being honest!



A little survey with colleagues

5) Anything else you wish young applicants would consider/know about?

- Make it easy for the recruiter to see that you are the best candidate
- Be honest, be realistic, think on the reviewer when compiling your application file.
- Before submitting your application, double check if you have attached all that is requested.
- If you have been invited to an interview, you are already considered to be a worthy candidate.
- Ask questions at the interview it shows you care and are prepared
- Try to be aware of your career plans and what job you are looking for and make sure you get the necessary skills and qualifications (certain skills like R, GIS, ... may just be necessary for a lot of jobs).

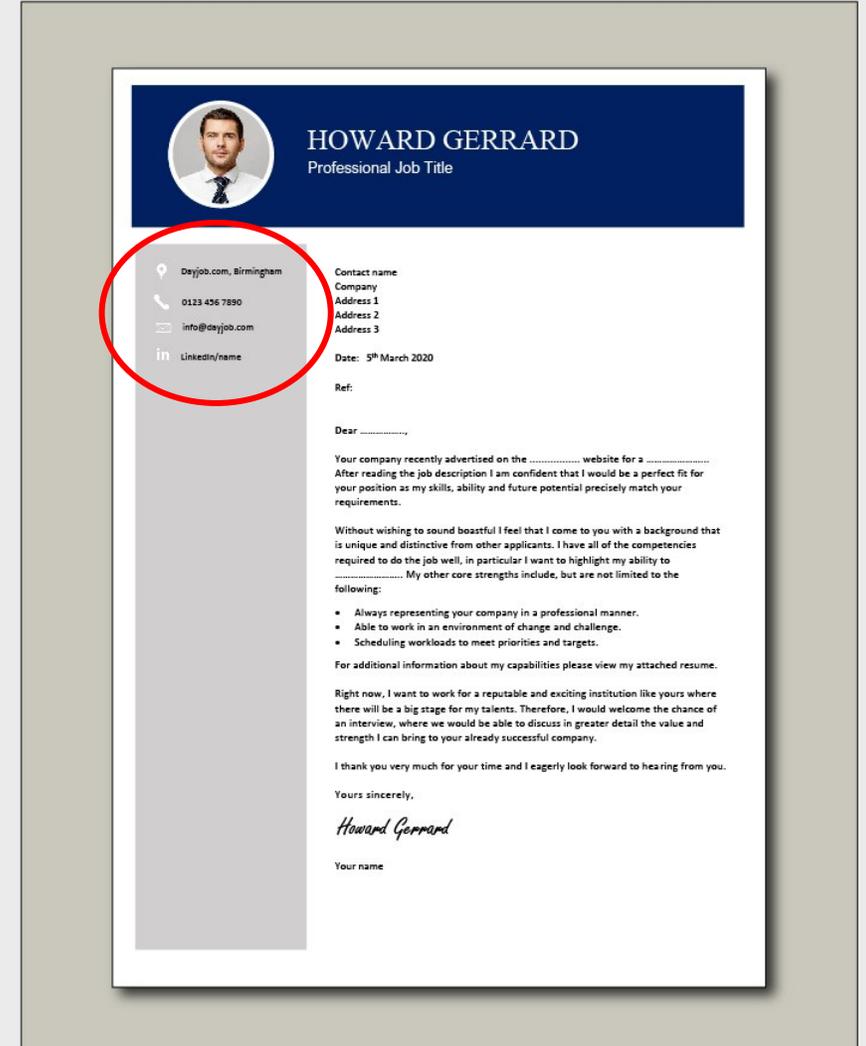
Motivation letter – The basics

The basics

- Your **name and contact details**: Clear and easy to find!
- **State the position** you apply for (was there a number or code?)
- **Highlight your availability** for an interview and respond to further questions
- “Thank you for your time”
- Formalities leave a good impression:
 - Date and place
 - Formatting,
 - Signature
 - If in letter format: Proper Address/contact of the company
 - A lot of attachment required? List them (also helps you make sure all are included)

Name

Date and place



HOWARD GERRARD
Professional Job Title

Dejjob.com, Birmingham
0123 456 7890
info@dejjob.com
LinkedIn/name

Contact name
Company
Address 1
Address 2
Address 3
Date: 5th March 2020
Ref:

Dear

Your company recently advertised on the website for a
After reading the job description I am confident that I would be a perfect fit for your position as my skills, ability and future potential precisely match your requirements.

Without wishing to sound boastful I feel that I come to you with a background that is unique and distinctive from other applicants. I have all of the competencies required to do the job well, in particular I want to highlight my ability to My other core strengths include, but are not limited to the following:

- Always representing your company in a professional manner.
- Able to work in an environment of change and challenge.
- Scheduling workloads to meet priorities and targets.

For additional information about my capabilities please view my attached resume.

Right now, I want to work for a reputable and exciting institution like yours where there will be a big stage for my talents. Therefore, I would welcome the chance of an interview, where we would be able to discuss in greater detail the value and strength I can bring to your already successful company.

I thank you very much for your time and I eagerly look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,
Howard Gerrard
Your name

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Motivation letter

Why are you the perfect candidate?

- *State where you found the vacancy and **why it interests you.***
- **Highlighting your previous experience** and what **value you can bring** to the company.
 - You can mix your **working experience** and **professional skills** with **personal features.**
 - Highlight things that can't be learned from your CV
 - Avoid duplication
 - Sell yourself but **be honest!**

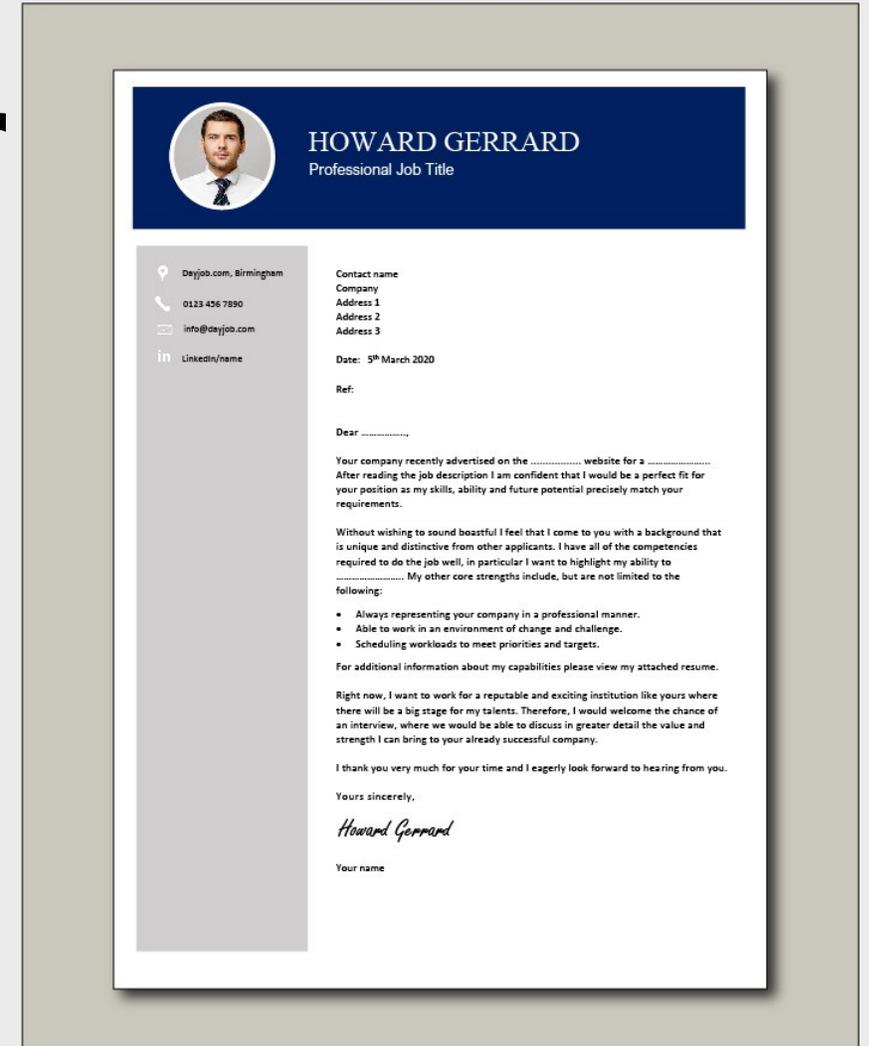
Motivation letter

Keep in mind

- **Keep it short!**
 - **1 page**
 - **Rather 3 than 5 paragraphs**
- **Try to find the correct name to address it to/ To Position title /"Dear Madam or Sir"**
 - **Don't use "to whom it may concern"**
- **Use short sentences!**
 - **Remember this will also be a sample of your**
 - **writing skills.**

Cherry on Top:

- **Use a "light" recognizable design and make it match the CV in style**





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Curriculum Vitae

Good starting point to
build your own CV:
Europass CV

<https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv>



Curriculum Vitae

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Betty Smith

32 Reading rd, Birmingham B26 3QJ United Kingdom

+44 2012345679 +44 7123456789

smith@kotmail.com

AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) betty.smith

Sex Female | Date of birth 01 March 1975

JOB APPLIED FOR

European project manager

WORK EXPERIENCE

August 2002 – Present

Independent consultant

British Council
123, Bd Ney, 75023 Paris (France)

Evaluation of European Commission youth training support measures for youth national agencies and young people

March 2002 – July 2002

Internship

European Commission, Youth Unit, DG Education and Culture
200, Rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels (Belgium)

- evaluating youth training programmes for SALTO UK and the partnership between the Council of Europe and European Commission
- organizing and running a 2 day workshop on non-formal education for Action 5 large scale projects focusing on quality, assessment and recognition
- contributing to the steering group on training and developing action plans on training for the next 3 years. Working on the Users Guide for training and the support measures

Business or sector European institution

October 2001 – February 2002

Researcher / Independent Consultant

Council of Europe, Budapest (Hungary)

Working in a research team carrying out in-depth qualitative evaluation of the 2 year Advanced Training of Trainers in Europe using participant observations, in-depth interviews and focus groups. Work carried out in training courses in Strasbourg, Slovenia and Budapest.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1997 – 2001

PhD - Thesis Title: 'Young People in the Construction of the Virtual University', Empirical research on e-learning

Brunel University, London United Kingdom

1993 – 1997

Bachelor of Science in Sociology and Psychology

Brunel University, London United Kingdom

- sociology of risk
- sociology of scientific knowledge / information society
- anthropology
E-learning and Psychology
- research methods



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Curriculum Vitae – Specials

In Research:

- List of publications
- Relevant conferences attended, talks given etc.

Personal touch:

In general: **Less is more! No 23-year-old BSc. needs to have a 10-page CV!**

But:

- **Something you are particularly proud of**
 - **A unique hobby**
 - **The reason for a gap or shift in direction in your CV.**
- should be Include it (keep it short!).**

Very likely recruiters will bring it up in the interview, giving you opportunity to speak about it!



Other application items

Make sure you include all required documents i.e.:

- Transcript of records
- Recommendation letters
- Proof of qualification

If you need to scan or copy items, make sure they are:

- Readable (appropriate image quality)
- In an appropriate size and format (usually pdf)
- Not upside down etc.

Pay attention to the asked format!

If application is sent via email, merge all documents in **1 pdf**.

Especially when this is asked in the open call!!!



Other application items

Adding more than what was asked for:

Have a great recommendation from your supervisor?

✉ Send it!

Don't:

Send a copy of every 5th grade sporting event participation certificate (etc.) you ever received!



Applying in IFSA

Most common opportunities in IFSA:

- Delegations with IFSA
 - Usually a google form: Follow the instructions!
- Official position in IFSA
 - Usually: **Motivation letter, motivation video**, verification letter



Applying in IFSA

Official position in IFSA

- 1. Read the call and carefully**
 1. What is the positions about?
 2. Is this something I am interested in and fit to do? (You will need to bring a lot of intrinsic motivation! So don't apply if you only think "*this is easy*" or "*this is something no one else will apply for so my chances are good*")
- 2. Look at the job description** (usually part of the call)
- 3. Lookup who currently holds the position** and contact them with any remaining questions or just for a firsthand account of the tasks.
- 4. Prepare your documents!**
- 5. Keep the required format, send it to the right address and keep the deadline!**



Applying in IFSA

Official position in IFSA

1. Motivation letter!

1. The call often outlines some questions or structure to use. **PLEASE STICK TO THIS!**
2. Other wise all that was said about general motivation letter also applies here

2. Motivation video

This is special in IFSA but also becoming more common. The idea is to get a better impression of the applicant, also in regular IFSA GA setting it is an opportunity for applicants not present in the room to give the speech every on-site applicant will give.

1. Keep to the instruction (time limit, what should be covered?)
2. Ask a friend to hold the camera, or use your computer to self record
3. Make sure you are in quiet surroundings!!! *Find a nice backdrop!*
4. View the video before sending it:

Too quiet?, A Chicken crowing in the back? So dark you face can't be seen?

☑ Re-record it! This is you first impression!

Thank you!
Let's have some questions ◀◀