

# BUILDING A COVER LETTER



Youth Information



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ▶ Analyse a job description for a vacancy
- ▶ How you form and write letters
- ▶ Identify requirements of a job
- ▶ Write suitable responses
- ▶ Learn how to structure a covering letter
- ▶ Learn how to construct a speculative letter



# THE JOB DESCRIPTION

Think of the Job Description as:

**YOUR SECRET WEAPON**

They are showing you exactly what they are looking for:



# JOB VACANCY ANALYSIS

## - THE RESPONSE

► Requirement

Must possess strong  
customer service skills



► Response

I possess strong  
customer service skills



# **JOB VACANCY ANALYSIS – THE RESPONSE**

**Try to respond to each requirement taking into account:**

- Skills
- Experience
- Accomplishments



# THE REQUIREMENT AND THE RESPONSE

## Response

Maintain a high standard  
of client care and service



Maintain a high standard  
of client care and service



Maintain a high standard  
of client care and service



## Requirement

### Skills

I possess strong customer service  
skills

### Experience

I have worked in Retail industry for  
over 10 years

### Accomplishment

I have been highly recommended by  
both customers and management



# PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

## Requirement

- ▶ 5+ years relevant work experience
- ▶ Highly proficient with MS office applications (incl. calendar and email)
- ▶ Confidentiality and discretion are required with private business matters
- ▶ Well organized

## Response

- ▶ I've worked as an administrative assistant for the past 7 years
- ▶ I am an expert user of MS office applications including Calendar (I supported the running of the departmental shared calendar) and email
- ▶ I am professional and discrete with confidential matters
- ▶ I'm a great organizer. I created a filing system that was rolled out company wide



# FILLING IN THE GAPS

**At this stage avoid using qualifiers such as:**

- 'However' or 'But'
- 'Even though'
- 'Never' / 'haven't'

**Instead of saying: "I have never worked within beauty sales but I can learn"... is **better framed** as...**

**"I can work within beauty sales because\_\_\_\_\_."**

- I am familiar with the products
- I have a number of years experience in the retail industry





## FINISHING TOUCHES

- ▶ Do some research about the company beyond what you've read in the job description
- ▶ Be professional but personal
- ▶ Show personal interest in the position and the company
- ▶ Get feedback on your cover letter - invite someone (or everyone) to review it for grammar, punctuation and content



# FINISHING TOUCHES

▶ If your sending this cover letter via email then edit the subject

line to include your name (helps the recipient to find your letter)

▶ FWD: Retail Sales Consultant – Spa Elite

▶ FWD: Joe Bloggs: Retail Sales Consultant – Spa Elite

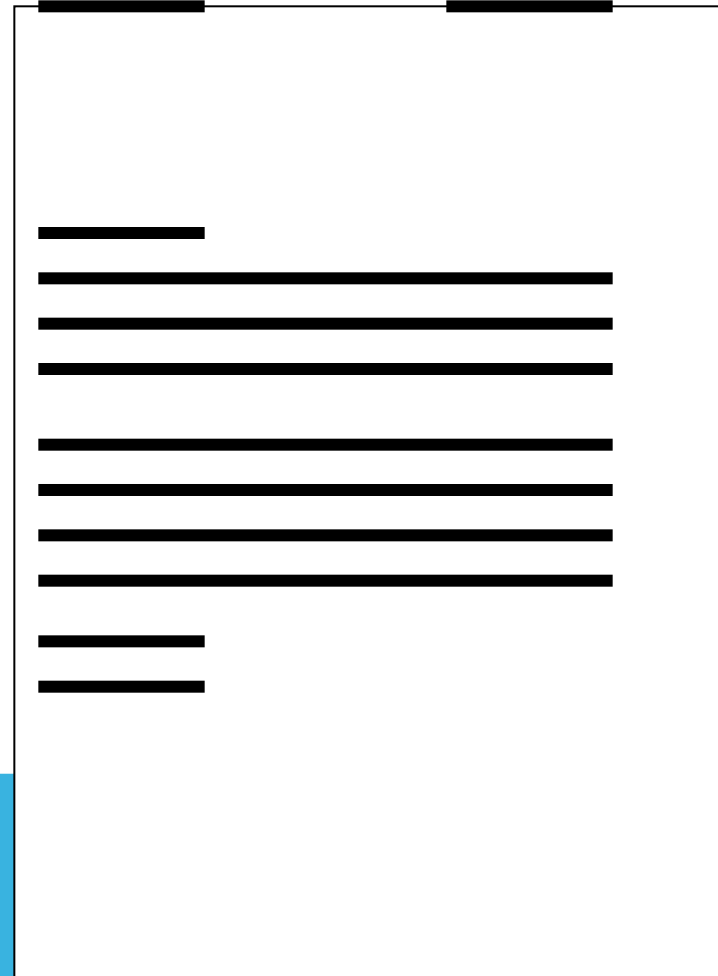
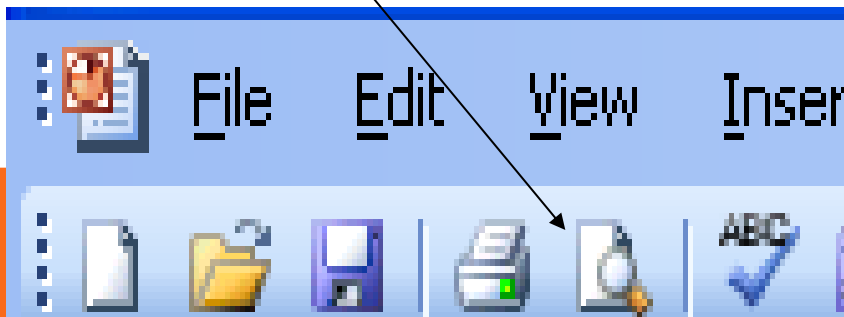


# THE COVERING LETTER – “THE SELLER”

The finished article...

**Justified and centralise the  
body of the text.**

Full page viewer to ensure  
that the you can see the  
overall layout prior to  
printing





# THE COVER LETTER – “THE SELLER”

Branding Image – Common Mistakes

- ▶ I wish to apply for the vacancy for \_\_\_\_\_ advertised in the \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_ 2021. Please find enclosed my CV for your consideration. Yours \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Sir / Madam  
Yours faithfully

Dear Mr. Jones  
Yours sincerely

- ▶ Outlining what the job can do for you, rather than what you can bring to the job is a common mistake.



# THE COVERING LETTER – THE SELLER

What it should say on ***one page only***

- ▶ Ensure letter is addressed to a named person if requested (or find out)
- ▶ Has an introduction
- ▶ Describes what you have to offer
- ▶ Details why you are applying for that position



## THE SPECULATIVE LETTER – THE INSIDER

- ▶ Structured in the same way as cover letters
- ▶ Speculative letters are a must in some industries where competition for jobs are high.
- ▶ Useful way of finding holiday work, work shadowing or work experience as these are less likely to be advertised and may be created for the right candidate
- ▶ Could reduce the competition you face as you may be considered for a vacancy before it is advertised or an employer may create a vacancy if they like what you have to offer.

***‘You Don’t Get! If You Don’t Ask’***



# GO GET THAT JOB!

- ▶ Remember to **READ THE JOB DESCRIPTION**
- ▶ Identify the **REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOB**
- ▶ Construct **SUITABLE RESPONSES** to the requirements
- ▶ **STRUCTURE** the look and feel of the letter
- ▶ Choose the **MOST SUITABLE TYPE** (cover or speculative depending on the type of application / reason)
- ▶ **Good Luck** and all the best in your job search!



**ANY QUESTIONS?**  
**CONTACT YOUTH INFORMATION**  
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