

Motivation letter

Your motivation letter is actually “part two” of your application. Your CV is a summary of the facts, such as your educational background and work experience. Your motivation letter allows you to show a bit more of your personality and indicate why you are suitable for the particular job position. So make sure that your motivation letter supports your CV and emphasises relevant information about your skills and experience. Before you start, analyse the vacancy and make sure you have enough information to write a good and compelling motivation letter. LinkedIn can also help in this area.

General tips

- ❑ Use short, active sentences - get to the point;
- ❑ Ensure your motivation letter is in line with your CV, but avoid identical overlap. In your CV, you can mention aspects about which you provide further details in your motivation letter;
- ❑ Avoid negative/denying words;
- ❑ Carefully check the name and job position of the receiver;
- ❑ Write convincingly, but not obtrusively. Don't draw conclusions in your text, but rather formulate your arguments in such a way that the receiver can reach the desired conclusion;
- ❑ Try to imagine the perspective of the reader. He or she wants to know “What's in it for me?” So don't focus on what the company and/or the job position means to you;
- ❑ Customise your motivation letter for every application, delete, clarify or move items;
- ❑ Avoid abbreviations and technical jargon;
- ❑ Make sure there are no spelling mistakes in your motivation letter;
- ❑ A motivation letter should be a maximum of 1 A4 sized page about 2/3 filled with text;
- ❑ Always send your CV and motivation letter in PDF format and put your name in the title of your CV, motivation letter and email;
- ❑ Have your motivation letter read by someone else before you send it.

Structure of the motivation letter

Address details

Company details and contact person

Place and date

Subject

Dear Mrs ___ or Mr ___, Make sure you have a name and do not send the letter to “Dear Mr/Mrs”.

Motivation paragraph

Choose a neutral opening or a real distinctive, compelling phrase if you have a talent for writing. Be sure to use wording that is right for you and is appropriate for the job position.

Example:

Hereby, I respond to the ___ vacancy which I found on the Faculty of Arts Career Services website. This vacancy caught my attention, because I see a great deal of similarity between the job requirements and my experiences.

If possible, refer to a previous contact moment that you may have had by phone or email.

Example:

I would like to respond to the ___ vacancy which I found on the website www.werkenbij.nl. Our phone call on [date] stoked my interest in the vacancy and has made me very enthusiastic about fulfilling this exiting job position.

Paragraph(s) about yourself

Convince the recipient that you are the right candidate. Explicitly argue and name characteristics, work experience, and skills which you possess and which match the requirements of the vacancy.

Writing these paragraphs is easiest if you have first made a list of the most important requirements of the job position and the desires of the company along with a list of your characteristics, experiences and skills that match the profile. Based on this scheme, you can “build” your argument.

Possible arguments:

I have the right education.

I have relevant work experience.

I have the right characteristics/attitude/mentality.

I'm specifically interested in this job position / organisation because ...

Please note: you may not be required to include a motivation letter with your CV, instead you may be asked to provide a short motivation. In this case, include the information from the “paragraphs about yourself”.

Conclusion of your motivation letter

Briefly indicate your goal for this application - getting an invitation for a job interview. Also here you can choose a neutral conclusion or a distinctive and compelling phrase. Just make sure the writing style is consistent with the paragraphs above.

Example:

I would like to further clarify my motivation in a personal conversation. I look forward to your swift response.

Kind regards, Nick de Vries

Annex: Curriculum Vitae