

INTERMEDIATE UNIT 4

a covering letter

speakout WRITING TIP

When you apply for a job and you write a covering letter, you need to show that you have the skills and qualities that the employer is looking for. You should give examples of how you have used them in previous jobs or in other areas of your life. You can use the same words and phrases that are used in the job advertisement.

- 1 Read the job advert below. What skills and qualities are they looking for? Which words and phrases can be reused in a covering letter?

Research assistant required:

Assistant needed to help author research her new non-fiction book. No formal qualifications are necessary but applicants must show relevant experience. You should be dynamic, a good communicator, well organised and capable of working independently. The successful candidate can work from home, but having a fast internet connection is essential. Contact me for more details.

New vacancies

- 2 Look at the different parts of a covering letter and put them into the correct order.
 - a) Close with *Yours sincerely* or *Yours faithfully* if you don't know the name of the person you are writing to.
 - b) End with what you would like to happen next. Will you contact them or should they contact you?
 - c) Explain that you have the qualities that they are looking for. Use the same words and phrases as they use in the advertisement.
 - d) Address your letter to an individual if possible. Use *Dear Sir/Madam* if you can't find an individual to address your letter to.
 - e) Explain why you are contacting them, what the job is and where you saw it advertised.

- 3 Read the covering letter. Is it a good covering letter? Why?/Why not?

Dear Ms Ennis,

I am writing to you regarding your advertisement for a Research Assistant, which I saw in The Daily Post. I would like to submit an application for this post. Please find my CV attached.

I have spent the last two years working as a researcher in a law office. Before that, I was at university doing a Media and Communications degree. I believe that I meet all the requirements you outline in your advertisement.

Good communicator: My degree taught me good communication skills, which I used in my day-to-day work at the law office. I also set up and managed a project to improve internal communications in the office.

Dynamic and organised: On my own initiative, I reorganised the system of researching and filing cases. This made it easier for the lawyers to have quick access to relevant information.

Independent worker: As part of my job at the law office, I occasionally had to travel and work on my own. In addition, when I was at university I spent a year studying abroad.

Thanks to this experience, I learnt a lot about getting things done with little support or help.

If you require any further information, please contact me on

01865 453728 or at grystvns@gmail.com.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Stevens

- 4 Read the covering letter again. Find examples of useful expressions which you can use in any covering letter.
- 5 Many covering letters and job applications are now sent by email. If you send a covering letter by post, what other information do you need to include?

- 6 Write a covering letter in response to the following advert.

Web designer required:

Web designer needed to start ASAP. You should have relevant experience and be up-to-date with the latest software and trends in the industry. We are looking for a highly creative individual with a proven ability to work as part of a team.

Please send your CV and samples of your work to Claire Gifford at cgifford@starweb.co.uk.

Plan your writing

- Think about the content of your letter and make notes about: why you are contacting the company, where you saw the job advertised, what relevant experience you've had and what qualities and skills the employer is asking for, supported by examples.

Check your writing

- Have you used formal language? Have you re-used some of the expressions in the advertisement?
- Have you checked your grammar and spelling?
- Did you find any mistakes?