

Chapter 2

Applying in a digital world of work

Annex 5 - Info sheet “mandatory and optional components of an application”

The following overview shows the various components of an application that - depending on the type of application - are a mandatory or optional part of an application.

Cover letter

Cover letter	
Description	<p>In contrast to the CV, which only contains facts, the cover letter is about an individual and convincing portrait of your own skills and qualifications. In the cover letter, you explain to the addressee what your motivation for the advertised position is: Why you applied, why you are the right candidate for the position and why the company should hire you.</p> <p>The so-called AIDA model offers a very good orientation framework for this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attention: generate attention• Interest: arousing interest• Desire: Trigger the desire to learn more about you• Action: Initiate the invitation to the interview <p><u>Checklist cover letter</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sender (name, address, telephone number, email address)• Date (on the right)• Receiver (company, first and last name of the receiver, address)• No application photo (only in the CV)• Subject (with specific reference to the job advertisement)• Salutation (always personal, never: "Dear Sir or Madam")• Original introductory sentence• Relation to the company• Your motivation• Brief description of your own profile, strengths and soft skills (with examples)• Reference to relevant knowledge (e.g. languages)• Notice of possible starting dates• Salary expectations (if requested)• Final formulation• Greeting and signature• Table of annexes
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compare sample letters• Correct example sentences / formulations• Highlight your strengths and skills and provide examples

Cover sheet

Cover sheet	
Description	<p>Generally, the cover sheet is optional. If it's done well, applicants can stand out from the crowd and add value to their application. The cover sheet has a purely creative function: It provides an initial overview of the entire application content and is used for later recognition.</p> <p><u>Checklist cover sheet</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headline (for example "Application"; short, concise, significant)• Intended position• Contact details (name, address, telephone, email)• Application photo in large• Table of contents (CV, references, certificates)
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compare sample cover sheets -> layout

CV

CV	
Description	<p>Together with the cover letter, the CV forms the core of your application. Most HR professionals even read the CV first. This makes it a kind of first work sample and should be created with the greatest accuracy. The three most important requirements for the tabular CV are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Great clarity in layout and design.• Clear structure in terms of structure.• Relevant information value in terms of content and skills. <p><u>Checklist CV</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal data (name, birthday / place, address)• Family status and nationality• Professional background• Education and training• Special qualifications (further education, certificates, languages)• Interests (memberships, social engagement, hobbies)
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compare sample CVs• Compile data for your own CV• Illustrate soft skills through a significant description of hobbies, school activities, internships etc.

Certificates

Description	<p>The certificates are an objective proof of the information in your CV and cover letter.</p> <p>Pay attention to a chronological order (current documents first, oldest documents last):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your previous job references (diplomas) come first. Instead of interim certificates, you can also enter your own job descriptions here. These descriptions list in keywords the areas of work, main activities and any projects you have completed.• The descriptions are followed by certificates qualifying for a profession. These are certificates that you receive upon completion of your vocational training, e.g. a skilled worker certificate. It also includes all further training certificates.• If you have completed your studies, you can enclose a copy of your Bachelor's, Master's, Diplom, examination or Magister degree certificate as well as the certificate of the highest degree.• Check whether your school leaving certificate is additionally required.• Other proof of performance: e.g. driving license, proof of computer or language courses, seminars in rhetoric, presentation and work techniques or time management. These are not attached in their entirety, but you choose whether the respective certificate of achievement is required for the aspired position. Further education certificates, i.e. certificates which do not lead to a further vocational qualification, are therefore not absolutely necessary. <p><u>Checklist Certificates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correct order of certificates in the same order of the CV• Scans in good quality• Intermediate certificates or own performance description (not necessary)• Work certificates from the (pre-)previous employer(s)• Advanced training certificate• Study graduation or training qualification• Certificates of further education and professional qualification
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a list with all of your potentially relevant certificates• Check which soft skills become visible from the individual certificates

Motivation letter

Description	<p>The motivation letter complements the cover letter. The motivation letter often is optional and emphasizes one's own key qualifications, personal goals, special professional qualifications and motivation in relation to the advertised position. The motivation letter offers space for individuality in giving a more detailed overview of your personality and emphasizes your strengths and soft skills.</p> <p><u>Checklist motivation letter</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sender (name, address, telephone number, email address)• Date (on the right)• Headline• Exciting introduction<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Possible further paragraphs:○ What else you should know about me○ Why I am applying to you○ My motivation for the position○ Why your company (special interest in the company)○ Personal focus (what is particularly important to you, what sets you apart from other applicants)○ My professional goals• Final sentence: e.g. invitation to interview, certify interest in the company• Greetings• Signature
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compare motivation letters and note appealing formulations• Compare different job advertisements that appeal to you and check whether a motivation letter is required for an application• Find a job advertisement that appeals to you and write a draft for a motivation letter Describe your soft skills in more detail that you have already briefly described in your CV and cover letter

Reference letter

Description	<p>The reference letters, unlike job references, are written on a voluntary basis by former employers or colleagues. In contrast to a job reference, concrete "soft skills" of the applicant are shown here. The reference speaker (does not always have to be the employer, can also be an employee, but high-ranking specialists are recommended as they are considered to be more experienced) should not be a close person, but someone from the company who can report objectively but in detail about your work. Reference letters are unspecific and formulated in a general way. While the employer's reference is usually characterized by legal and formal templates, the reference letter, in contrast, can be formulated much more freely and thus reveal the personality of the applicant. It is best suited for young professionals who do not yet have many job references. However, please include a maximum of three letters of reference in your application.</p> <p><u>Checklist reference letter</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letterhead: (first name, surname of exhibitor, name of company, address and direct telephone number of exhibitor in the company for possible queries)• Date, name and address of the addressee and subject• Content:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Short self-introduction of the exhibitor○ Relationship between addressee and exhibitor○ Reason for exhibition○ Objective recommendation○ Qualifications achieved○ Success in working time in the company○ Subjective recommendations (soft skills, personality and suitability of the position in the company)• Date and signature of exhibitor
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check your job references and certificates: for which aspects (hard and soft skills) do you need detailed evidence for in the form of a reference letter?• Think about who from your job or training position you could ask to write a reference letter for you and ask 1-2 persons to do so

Work samples

Description	<p>Work samples are concrete examples or samples of done so far, e.g. photos, posters or prototypes. They can also be your publications in books or magazines, activities as a speaker at congresses or even developed websites and apps.</p> <p>If these are not expressly requested by the company, but you would like to send them, you better ask again if it is possible to send. Otherwise they may have a negative effect on your application, as they take up more time for the HR staff.</p> <p>If you do not have any work samples yet, you can make up a fictitious project and indicate in your application that this is a fictitious project. Alternatively, you can indicate in your application that you will bring the work samples to a later date, e.g. to a job interview.</p> <p>An alternative for work samples are project lists of work samples that are not tangible e.g. campaigns, organized events, designed buildings etc.</p> <p><u>Checklist work samples</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work samples in the appendix of the application• Max. 3-4 work samples per application. Select only the most recent and best projects, i.e. there must be a thematic connection to the application
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider with your trainer/a work colleague etc. which work samples could be suitable in your work area for an application• Compare different job advertisements that appeal to you and ask whether work samples are required

Videos

Description	<p>Videos are a creative way of applying and considered a supplement to the classic application documents mentioned above (CV, cover letter, certificates). In contrast to the written application, the video allows more involvement in the application process. You can present yourself more versatile and authentic to the company.</p> <p>It saves time for the entrepreneurs and clearly sets you apart from the crowd, as you can convince with your personality. It offers you the opportunity to present your own soft skills directly.</p> <p>More about videos in Unit 3 of this module.</p>
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