
THE ULTIMATE FOUR-STEP COVER LETTER FORMULA THAT GETS RESULTS



FORMAT OF A KILLER COVER LETTER

RECRUITER'S
CONTACT
DETAILS

YOUR
CONTACT
DETAILS AND
DATE

1. THE
HOOK

2. THE PAIN
HYPOTHESIS

3. THE HERO
TO THE
RESCUE

4. THE CLOSE

5. THE CALL
TO ACTION
(CTA)



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THE KILLER FOUR-STEP FORMULA

If you want to see a substantial increase in the response you get to your online job applications, you need to nail your cover letter.

Gone are the days when you could write a generic overview of your skills and apply to tens of jobs at the click of a button. This will no longer cut the mustard with recruiters; they have seen and read it all thousands of times before, and they now want someone who stands out from the rest.

The top job candidates do things differently. YOU need to do things differently.

But how? Quite simply, in the space of one A4 page or less, you need to convince the recruiter that you are a unique value proposition that they simply can't afford to miss.

And, believe it or not, this is incredibly easy to achieve. In fact, you can do it in just four simple steps.

**1. THE
HOOK**

**2. THE
PAIN**

**3. THE
HERO**

**4. THE
CTA**

STEP ONE: THE HOOK

Here's a little secret that every successful writer knows and practices: to entice people to read something, you need a hook. Cover letters are no different. A hook is a simple statement that grabs the reader's attention right off the bat.

A safe hook: "I am enclosing my resume in response to the role of Customer Service Agent that was advertised on www.getmeajob.com. I have over five years experience spanning several blue-chip organizations...." (Yawn).

A GREAT hook: "With five years of goal-oriented experience delivering quality customer service in a demanding environment, I am offering XYZ a unique and advanced skill set that will meet your objective to increase customer satisfaction measures." (How? Let me read more!).

The second hook is great because not only does it demonstrate that you are a dynamic and punchy candidate, it also relates your skills to what the company is looking for. The recruiter is immediately encouraged to think of you as the solution to an existing problem and to imagine you in the job. **This can be incredibly powerful stuff.**

1. THE
HOOK

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STEP ONE: THE PAIN

So you've enticed the recruiter to actually read your letter as opposed to tossing it in the garbage or hitting delete. This is where you really make your move.

Recruitment is pretty simple. Human resources personnel are paid to move a manager, team or operation from a "before" state to an "after" state. In the "before" state, the organization or team has a problem that needs solving: their pain point. They may lack skills in a given area, may have a staff shortage, may have unhappy customers... the list is endless. They want to find the ideal candidate who will get them to the "after" state. You need to convince them that you are exactly that person. You can do this by showing an understanding of a business pain the recruiter may be experiencing. Through doing so, you paint a picture of yourself as a knowledgeable and informed candidate who relates to the organization.

Great pain hypothesis: "Maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction is becoming increasingly challenging in today's competitive environment. Businesses need to create a remarkable customer experience to really make a difference."

Don't patronize the recruiting manager. Just make a clear statement that demonstrates you have an understanding of the industry and the job you are applying for.

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STEP THREE: THE HERO

This is the point at which you tie your amazing talents to the recruiter's pains by telling a simple story about an occasion when you single-handedly eradicated a pain point and saved the day at work.

Don't be tempted to blow your own trumpet. Let the facts and data speak for themselves.

A great hero statement: "When working for Lighthouse Inc. as a customer service representative, I created a new training program that successfully increased employee retention by 9%."

See what you have done here? You have told the recruiter:

"Hey, I understand your industry, I understand some of the difficulties your organization is facing, and I can make a difference. In fact, I've done it before to great effect!"

There are no two ways about it: **This will impress the socks off the recruiting manager!**

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STEP THREE: THE CTA

So you've painted a great picture of how you can take the hiring manager from the "before" state of pain to the "after" state of organizational effectiveness. You now need to seal the deal.

If there's one thing that you absolutely **MUST** do in your cover letter, it's ask for an interview. Otherwise, there's no point in sending the letter at all.

Be direct and straight to the point. You've not written the letter just to introduce yourself to the recruiter. You've written the letter because **you want an interview.**

Poor closing statement: "I hope to hear from you soon."

Great closing statement and call to action: "I would welcome an opportunity to discuss more examples of how my skills can help you to improve your customer satisfaction levels. Please call me on the number below to schedule an interview."

Psychologists have proven time and time again that people tend to take action when they are told to do something. Telling the recruiter to arrange the interview can be a simple, yet effective, method of making the hiring manager take action on your request.

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A KILLER COVER LETTER

Dear James Martin,

Congratulations on winning a Webby award for your new customer service website. That's a remarkable achievement and something your team must be very proud of. **(The hook).**

I understand that as a result of your merger with BG Ltd., you are currently undergoing a major structural change. I can imagine this has had a significant impact on your customer service operations. **(The pain).**

When I managed the customer service department at Lycos Inc. during the group's acquisition of iSeek, I was tasked with reducing headcount by 22% while ensuring customer service levels were maintained. Through implementing new operational processes, I successfully met the headcount reduction requirement while also increasing customer satisfaction scores by 13%. **(The hero).**

I know you are now recruiting a new manager for your customer service department. I believe I have the skills you need to enhance customer service levels and I would welcome an opportunity to work in a ground-breaking organization such as yours. It would be great if we could chat more about how my skills and experiences can make a difference to your new organizational structure.

Please call me on the number below to schedule an interview at your earliest convenience. **(The CTA).**

Best Regards,

Gillian Armitage

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COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

● MUST ADDRESS ●

- ✓ Why are you interested in working for the advertising company?
- ✓ What specifically appeals to you about the role you are applying for?
- ✓ Why are you the best person for the job?

● THE NUTS AND BOLTS ●

- ✓ Use a legible, professional format such as Times New Roman point size 12.
- ✓ Save the letter using an appropriate name.
- ✓ Format the letter correctly. See our guide to formatting a cover letter.
- ✓ Fit everything onto one page.
- ✓ Make sure there are no spelling and grammatical errors. Use Vappingo's editing and proofreading services if you need help.
- ✓ Find out the name of the hiring manager and address the letter directly to that person.

COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

● STAND OUT FROM THE REST ●

- ✓ Write a clear and compelling hook that encourages the recruiter to read more.
- ✓ Show an understanding of a pain point the firm may currently be experiencing.
- ✓ Tell a simple story in which you explicitly describe something you have done in the past to solve a similar problem to that the organization is facing.
- ✓ Use facts and data to support the claims you make.
- ✓ Close the letter by asking for an interview and telling the recruiter how they can contact you.

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