

Before sending the application: the final check

Mistakes in application documents – in terms of both content and form – are never good. Readers (still) often use them as a reason to reject applications or to assume that candidates are lacking in motivation or respect. Therefore, take time to draft your application carefully and stand apart from all those that have not been as careful. This makes a good first impression and indirectly indicates commitment, interest and competence, too.

Four eyes see more than two – ask someone you trust for feedback and to proofread your documents. An external review helps to see missing information or imprecise language. Check the technology, too. Because technical errors may prevent your application arriving properly.

Moreover, keep the following in mind: Always provide your documents in the form that the recipient defines, and ensure that your application is recipient-friendly.

Before sending your application, check the technical and formal elements, and the content against the following checklist.

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1. General check

Matching, motivation and personality

Other persons (also from different fields) can recognise...

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| who I am applying to and why. | |
| why I am applying specifically for this position / to this employer / company. | |
| what motivates, interests and fascinates me (e.g. about the subject, the position, employer). | |
| where my profile matches the searched profile. | |
| which relevant qualifications / skills and know-how I have for the specific position. | |
| which relevant practical experience I may have already gathered. | |
| how / where / with what I gathered practical experience. | |
| what makes me stand out, what my strengths are and where I prove / have proven this. | |
| what the recipient of my application will gain by hiring me. | |

Formal and technical aspects

| | |
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| The documents are available in the required form and structure. | |
| File format for digital applications: all documents are .pdf files, unless another format is expressly specified. Do not use any file formats from text processing programs that can only be displayed correctly and read, if the reader has the program or specific program version! | |
| All documents can be saved and opened; the file names are conclusive and follow a uniform principle. | |
| The appearance is appealing: clearly structured, uniformly formatted, no text waste or solid text blocks. | |
| The design of the CV and cover letter match. | |
| The contact data are complete, easy to find and correct. | |
| The correct recipient is stated at all points of the documents. | |
| Any providers of references are informed and have given their approval. | |
| I am reliable and easy to reach, by telephone, post or e-mail. My mailbox has enough space, all redirections function correctly and I keep checking the spam folder. | |

2. Checking the CV

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| My CV contains all relevant information to show my suitability and personality. | |
| My career can be reviewed quickly without long searching. | |
| I state points of focus, tasks, projects etc. that match the specific position. It is not necessary to look in the appendices first to see them. | |
| I have added relevant details about tasks, responsibilities and activities to my experience (jobs, work placements, projects). | |
| If possible, I integrated keywords of the job description. | |
| My CV has no gaps that are longer than three months. | |
| The CV contains all information / stations that I mention in my cover letter. | |
| All information is correct and true. All dates match my certificates. | |
| I divided my CV into coherent categories. | |
| The sequence within the categories is in chronological reverse order. | |
| I stated all times in months and years (mm/yyyy or mm.yyyy). | |
| All names (e.g. employer, work placements, higher education institutions, organisations) are correct. Companies are listed including the legal form (e.g. GmbH, AG, Co. KG). | |
| The CV does not contain and abbreviate technical terms (except they are part of the job advert) or filling words. | |
| The design also looks good in a pdf document. | |

3. Checking the cover letter

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| My cover letter is about a $\frac{3}{4}$ page long and has the format of a business letter. | |
| The reference is correct and contains the exact job name. | |
| The names of the employer and contact person are correct. | |
| Persons that I mention in the cover letter are also informed. | |
| If possible, I addressed the recipient personally. | |
| I wrote an individual text; it is not a template or an un-tailored standard letter. | |
| My cover letter contains important and any stipulated information (see above). | |
| My cover letter is clearly structured into an introduction, a main part and a conclusion. | |
| My cover letter is easy to read. Sentence structure and language style are clear and not complicated / complex. All statements are clear. I avoided unnecessary repetitions; each word contains a necessary information. | |
| I am specific and avoid superfluous formulations, both with regard to my suitability and my motivation. | |
| I avoid brackets and abbreviations (except they are part of the job advert). | |
| I use examples to underscore my professional competencies, my soft skills and my personality. | |
| The examples in my cover letter can be found easily in my CV. | |
| I state important recruitment facts: Starting date, possibly duration, e.g. of a work placement or dissertation; whether this was a mandatory work placement or a voluntary work placement; salary requirement, if this is specified in the vacancy post. | |
| I feel represented through my cover letter. I can explain all aspects when asked. | |

4. Checking appendices and online profiles

Appendices

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| I provide all relevant/ requested appendices. | |
| The documents are legible and scanned in good quality – not photographed. | |
| I provide the documents in the correct upright format, the reader does not need to rotate them. | |
| The sequence of certificates correspond to the sequence in the CV. | |

Online profile(s)

| | |
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| There are no inconsistencies in the information in my application. The information (e.g. stations, times, qualification names etc.) matches the CV. | |
| The photograph is current; preferably, it is the same picture as in the CV. | |
| The terms for 'search' and 'vacancy' match the keywords in your application. | |
| If the profile is linked in the CV: the call-up link functions and the profile settings grant viewing to non-contacts. | |

5. Checking online and e-mail applications

Application via the online application system

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| The application form refers to the correct vacancy post. | |
| I filled in the application form is completely. | |
| I have answered all questions, even those that are clear from my application documents. | |
| I uploaded all documents in the designated upload fields. | |
| The text in the plain text fields are free of errors and comprehensible. I have used complete sentences to answer questions. | |

Do you need to enter the cover letter into a plain text field?

Then transfer the text – from the title to the greeting and name – and format it as far as possible.

Can you download, save and / or print an overview of your information?

Take this opportunity for a final check before saving it in your files. Thus, you can check later which information you provided.

Are you having technical problems?

Check whether you can remedy this yourself (e.g. oversized documents, missing information). Otherwise, contact the named contact person as soon as possible.

Make sure that you get a confirmation of receipt!

This is usually sent automatically when you click on 'send application'.

Application via e-mail

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| My application comprises a single e-mail. | |
| I send my application to the email address stated in the vacancy post. | |
| My sender address is serious and unique, not a fun name or number. | |
| I filled in reference line correctly and the code number is correct. | |
| The title and text in the e-mail do not contain any errors. | |
| The text in the e-mail contains at least the necessary information: the reason for and the content of my e-mail, and for what I am applying. | |
| The e-mail text format is free of errors. | |
| The appendix is available, and can be saved and opened. | |
| The appendix is clearly structured and the e-mail has an appropriate / the specified size. For instance, 1 document with the full application; 3 documents (cover letter, CV, appendices). | |