

## Your proposal / cover letter

After vetting clients and finding a job that looks sensational, it's time to pounce. Act quickly and set those wheels of getting hired in motion. Naturally a great Proposal is paramount to getting noticed and sealing the deal.

Your cover letter is how you introduce yourself, highlight your skills and experience, and tell the client exactly why they should hire you. It's your big chance to show that you've read the job description, understand the project, and are qualified for the job.

Here's how to write a cover letter that impresses clients and leads to interviews:

- **Customize your Proposal.**

Clients can spot "cut-and-paste" Proposals from a mile away (1.6 kilometers), giving you the axe instantly. Cookie-cutter responses stand out like a sore thumb and earn you a quick thumbs down. Ask questions too. As well as showing interest, it's good to begin a two-way dialog between you and the client.

- **Be succinct.**

Be a good editor. Brevity is vital, as clients may be browsing several proposals in a short amount of time. And please, no typos. Spellchecker is your friend.

- **Show you're a good listener.**

Be sure to demonstrate that you've read the job posting. Ask good questions, and show interest and enthusiasm.

- **Highlight the value you bring.**

Don't rely only on your Profile. Be specific about benefits you bring to this particular job. Spotlight relevant experiences you've had, how you tackled similar jobs and what unique approaches and skills you bring to the table.

- **Ask for the job.**

Think of your Proposal as an interview. What would you say to make sure you get called back? Show your enthusiasm and let the person know you want to start the project soon. Thank them for their time too.

- **Make a professional impression.**

Begin with a warm, professional greeting. "Hello Mr. Smith" or "Hi John" are both polite and appropriate. A simple "hello" sets a professional tone when you don't have the name of the person doing the hiring.

- **Follow directions!.**

Some clients might ask you to answer a specific question or include a keyword in your cover letter. This helps them filter out generic, "copy and paste" cover letters. Look for these directions and follow them. It shows that you're paying close attention to their job post.

- **Close the deal.**

Let them know your availability to discuss further. It's a polite way to "ask for the job" and reinforce your enthusiasm.

- **Reread, edit, and consider**

Take another look at the job description. Did you address all of the criteria and answer the client's questions? Have you added relevant links to samples of your work? Do a final grammar and spelling check before you hit "send."

## Good sample

The #1 mistake new freelancers make is not taking the time to write a relevant, error-free cover letter! Here's how to do it right:



Once you have applied, you may receive a notification that the client would like to setup an interview, or maybe even hire you immediately. Occasionally, you may not hear anything back. Clients are not required to respond to applications, so keep your options open by applying to other jobs.