



Skillmax Resource Guide

COVERING LETTERS



Contents

Welcome to Unit 4	4
Learning outcome E3	5
Background to covering letters	6
What is a covering letter?	7
Activity 1	7
Activity 2	8
Understanding the importance of research and preparation	9
Constructing a covering letter using appropriate layout	11
Activity 3	12
Activity 4	13
Checklist for covering letters	14
Organising information in logical and cohesive paragraphs using formal language and technical terms	15
Activity 5	15
Activity 6	18
Activity 7	19
Activity 8	20
Relating qualifications and experience to a specific job advertisement	21
Activity 9	21
Writing speculative letters	26
Activity 10	26
Writing covering letters in email applications	28
Activity 11	29
Activity 12 Assessment task	29
Answers	30
Glossary for covering letters	34

Welcome to Unit 4

Unit 4 focuses on preparing covering letters. You will examine different covering letter formats and appropriate positive vocabulary. You will also analyse different covering letters and how well they respond to particular job advertisements.

Assessment

There is one formal assessment task in Unit 4.

You will prepare a covering letter (Activity 12) to accompany the résumé you prepared in Unit 3. Your teacher will use the criteria listed in Learning Outcome E3 to assess your covering letter.

Learning outcome: CSWE IV (E) E3

Prepare a covering letter to accompany résumé

Assessment criteria	Conditions and methods of assessment
<p>3.1 Write a coherent, logically structured covering letter of approximately one page in length</p> <p>3.2 Use appropriate layout, eg address, date, salutation, job reference</p> <p>3.3 Use appropriate staging, eg opening, outline of relevant skills and experience closing</p> <p>3.4 Refer to attachments</p> <p>3.5 Demonstrate suitability for the position sought</p> <p>3.6 Use appropriate register, eg professional, confident, persuasive</p> <p>3.7 Use coherent and logically structured paragraphs</p> <p>3.8 Link ideas cohesively and logically by using appropriate references and conjunctions</p> <p>3.9 Use vocabulary and grammatical structures appropriate to formal language, eg passive, complex noun groups, complex sentences with dependent clauses</p> <p>3.10 Use vocabulary appropriate to technicality of content</p> <p>3.11 Use accurate spelling and punctuation</p>	<p>Letter is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approximately one page in length • in response to an authentic advertisement • word processed <p>Learners may use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dictionaries • spellcheck <p>Appropriate attachments are included.</p> <p>Sample task</p> <p>Learners prepare covering letters for their résumé modified in CSWE IV (E) E2: <i>Modify résumé in response to job advertisement requirements.</i></p>

Background to covering letters

A cover letter is the **introduction** to a prospective employer. As it is the initial contact it has to make an immediate impact. It is important to remember that the quality of your written job application will determine whether or not you are invited to attend an interview. It is not necessary for the written application to be long, but it is important that it is easy to read, has all the relevant information and gives a good impression of you.

A **well-written** and **well-presented** covering letter helps to ensure that a prospective employer will consider reading your résumé and this will increase your chance of obtaining an interview.

Researching the **company** and the **position** is a vital part of preparing to write a successful covering letter.

Employers create job advertisements so they can identify suitable applicants for the position and screen out those who do not fit the job.

Every application for employment should include a **customised** covering letter regardless of whether the application is mailed, faxed or emailed.

Information in the covering letter should be **specific** to the position advertised.

It is important to study the advertisement carefully and address any/all **specific criteria** mentioned. This involves outlining **qualifications** and **training, experience** and **key skills** relevant to the position, even if the information is also included in the résumé.

A covering letter must include personal examples of how you meet the requirements of the position and demonstrate a **positive**, enthusiastic attitude to work.

A covering letter should reflect what you can do for the employer and not what the employer can do for you!

What is a covering letter?

Activity 1

Discuss the following questions in groups. Write your answers in the space provided. Then discuss your answers as a class.

- 1 What is a covering letter?
- 2 When do you write a covering letter?
- 3 Who is going to read the covering letter?
- 4 What is the purpose of the covering letter?
- 5 What information would you include?
- 6 Does the covering letter have the same purpose in your country of origin?
- 7 What advice would you give someone writing a covering letter?

Activity 2

Look at the diagram below and discuss what is involved in writing a covering letter.

Why?

Application in response to an ad

(Remember the key purpose of a covering letter is to help the employer decide whether to invite you in for an interview – and indeed whether or not to read your résumé).

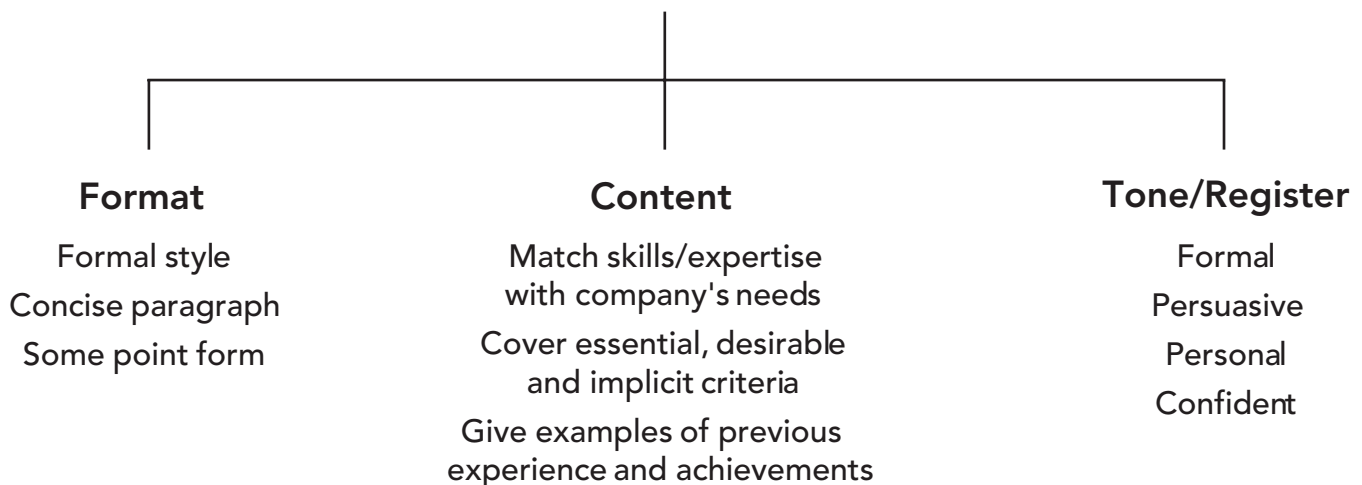
How?

List skills and achievements

Research company and position

Match skills to the requirements of the position

(Your covering letter should be tailored to each different job you apply for.)



Understanding the importance of research and preparation

To write a successful covering letter, it is important to understand the necessity for thorough research and preparation.

A Research the employer

You need to find out as much about the employer as possible, for example:

- Is the employer a private company or public corporation?
- What major products or services does it provide?
- How many people does it employ?
- Where is the employer located?

You can find the answers by:

- visiting the company website
- reading recruitment brochures, annual reports and product profiles
- speaking to people from the company or in the same industry
- accessing reference periodicals such as *Business Who's Who*, *Kompass*, *Graduate Opportunities* etc

B Research the position and its requirements

Your covering letter should indicate that you have a clear understanding of the position and its requirements.

You can familiarise yourself by:

- reading about the job in *JobGuide* (www.jobguide.com or www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au)
- analysing the requirements in the job advertisement
- reading the Statement of Duties in the information package
- ringing the company to clarify the requirements
- talking to others in similar positions or industries

C Analyse the job advertisement

Refer to *Unit 2: Reading job advertisements*.

- Analyse the job requirements by making a list under the headings **What the employer wants** and **What I can offer**.
- Make notes about what you will write.
- Decide what your selling points are for this job and make a list.
- When possible, always **address your letter to a person**, not an organisation. If no name is given in the ad, use your initiative to telephone the company and ask for the name of the Manager or Human Resource Manager.
- Be sure to ask for the correct spelling.
- If necessary, ask *Is that Mr or Ms?*
- Telephone the company and speak to the contact person for further information about the position. This will help you decide what to write in the letter.

D Write a well-presented letter

- Use appropriate layout.
- Use A4 paper and a good printout.
- Write as many drafts as necessary.
- Avoid errors in spelling and punctuation.
- Use a dictionary or spellcheck.
- Edit your letter before sending it (get someone else to check it for you).
- Make sure the overall appearance of your letter is neat and easy to read.

E Prepare your job application package

- Attach photocopies of any references, transcripts or certificates to your cover letter. Never send originals.
- Keep copies of everything you send including the job advertisement as preparation for your interview.
- Keep a diary handy of all your applications so that you know which employer is calling and about which particular position.

Constructing a covering letter using appropriate layout

A covering letter should be no more than one page. The justification is to the left of the page and there is minimal punctuation in addresses and dates. The stages are clearly defined. There can be some flexibility in the layout, for example, in the position of the date.

Study the format below.

No/Street Suburb State Postcode
Email Fax (if applicable) Phone/Mobile no
Date
Name of person to whom you are sending this letter Title of this person Company or business name Address (or mailing address) of the Company Suburb State Postcode
Person's email (if applicable) Company's fax (if applicable)
Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms Surname or Sir/Madam
Re: Subject/Application for.....
First paragraph Refer to the job you are applying for, where and when it was advertised including job reference number, if stated.
Middle paragraphs/body of letter The middle changes with each application. It should however: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mention your qualifications, training, experience, technical and personal skills, relevant to the job as advertised; this indicates that you know what the job actually involves, shows you meet all the requirements listed and convinces the employer that you are interested and able to do the job • refer to your attached résumé for further information, academic transcripts and copies of references (and anything else you have included with the letter) • indicate that you know something about the company's products and/or services
Last paragraph <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-express your interest in the job and why you are suitable • indicate that you are available for an interview at the employer's convenience
Yours sincerely (name known) OR Yours faithfully (Sir/Madam) <i>Your signature</i> Your name typed
Enc: academic transcripts/two references

Activity 3

The list below also shows the important stages in a covering letter but in the wrong order.

Match these parts to the format on *page 59*. Write the numbers of the parts on the format.

- 1 Greeting
- 2 Date
- 3 Name of recipient
- 4 Closing
- 5 Availability for interview
- 6 Signature
- 7 Name of sender
- 8 Address of sender
- 9 What documents are enclosed – with the exception of résumé (which is referred to in the body of the letter)
- 10 Address of recipient
- 11 Relevant technical skills
- 12 Relevant personal skills
- 13 Mention of enclosed résumé for further information
- 14 Title of recipient
- 15 Experience, training and achievements
- 16 Opening - interest in position/mention of advertisement
- 17 Subject line/Application for
- 18 Summary of suitability for the position

Activity 4

Look again at the list on *page 60* and write the correct number beside the corresponding parts in the covering letter below. Could you improve the layout of the letter?

5/12 Hebersham Road
Mt Druitt NSW 2770
M: 0418 234173

3 September 2009

Ms Sue Plateroti
Food Services Site Manager
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
Camperdown NSW 2050

Dear Ms Plateroti

Re: Application for the position of Secretary in the Food & Services Department

Further to the telephone conversation I had with you yesterday concerning the position of secretary in the Food & Services Department advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on August 29 2009, I am writing to confirm my interest in applying for the job.

With reference to the criteria mentioned in the advertisement, I would like to highlight my relevant skills and experience.

- 10 years experience as a secretary using MS Office package for Office Administration
- Typing speed 60wpm with 99% accuracy
- Accustomed to working as part of a multicultural team
- Able to work long flexible hours unsupervised
- Excellent communication skills in English

With my strong background in the secretarial field, as well as being a person from a non-English speaking background, I feel confident I can make a strong contribution to the department.

To aid you in assessing my capabilities, I have enclosed my résumé. I can be contacted on the above mentioned mobile number and am available for an interview at any time.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely

S J Bayad

Salma Bayad

Checklist for covering letters

You can use this checklist when editing and proofreading your covering letters.

INCLUDES APPROPRIATE STAGES

- ☐ Addresses of sender and receiver
- ☐ Name and title of receiver (Dear Mr Smith not Dear Mr John Smith)
- ☐ Appropriate opening
- ☐ Mention of experience, training and achievements relevant to essential criteria
- ☐ Mention of technical and personal skills
- ☐ Mention of enclosed résumé (for further information)
- ☐ Summary of suitability for position
- ☐ Availability for interview and contact details
- ☐ Appropriate closing

WELL PRESENTED USING APPROPRIATE FORMAT

- ☐ Spacing
- ☐ Paragraphs
- ☐ Some point form
- ☐ Length
- ☐ Stresses information relevant to essential and desirable criteria in body of letter
- ☐ Gives concrete examples of experience
- ☐ Does not overuse / at beginning of sentences
- ☐ Stresses what applicant can do for employer not what employer can do for applicant

CHOOSES APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE *(Refer to glossary at end of module)*

- ☐ Standard phrases
- ☐ Action verbs in the past tense
- ☐ Positive words
- ☐ Sentences are short and clear
- ☐ Paragraphs are linked cohesively and logically
- ☐ Uses correct spelling, punctuation and grammar

USES APPROPRIATE TONE IN LETTER

- ☐ Professional/formal

LEVEL OF FORMALITY SUITED TO THE POSITION

- ☐ Persuasive
- ☐ Enthusiastic
- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Confident

Organising information in logical and cohesive paragraphs using formal language and technical terms

Activity 5

A Read this covering letter for the advertisement on the next page, then analyse and comment on the letter using the checklist for cover letters on page 62.

8/73-75 Smith Street
Dulwich Hill NSW 2203
Email:
Tel:

20 October 2009

Ms Anna Obradovic
Security Mailing Services Pty Ltd
PO Box 86
Kingsgrove NSW 2208

Dear Ms Obradovic

I would like to apply for the Desktop Publishing position advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on Saturday 17 October 2009 and I have enclosed my résumé for your consideration.

I recently completed an Information Technology course at Sydney Institute of Technology, Ultimo campus. While a student there, I studied word processing, desktop publishing as well as a number of other subjects related to computers.

My work with the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia has given me local experience in preparing newsletters and brochures, designing a fax-cover template and a new logo for the organisation. This experience also enabled me to liaise with staff and clients in both spoken and written English.

As an experienced desktop publisher in two leading Bosnian daily newspapers, I have worked in different software environments (MS Windows XP and Vista), using knowledge of different packages such as MS Office, MS Publisher, CorelDraw X4, Adobe InDesign CS3 and QuarkXPress.

My skills include:

- Designing layout for brochures, newsletters, newspapers
- Amending layout including margins, spacing and columns, selecting fonts
- Integrating text with graphics such as logos, graphs and charts
- Scanning and merging photographs with computer images
- Adjusting colourings on the computer

With my sound knowledge and extensive experience in the area of desktop publishing I feel I could make a valuable contribution to your company.

Thank you for your consideration of my application. If you require any further information, please contact me on the above telephone number or email address. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

DDjukic

Darko Djukic

B Underline the essential criteria in the advertisement.

DESKTOP SUPPORT

Are you bored with your secretarial/administrative duties?

Here is an excellent opportunity for an enthusiastic person with keen analytical skills and an eye for detail to gain entry into a Desktop Publishing role. Key responsibilities will include the scanning of logos, set-up of letters and forms and proofreading.

Essentially you will have knowledge of MS Word and experience using a desktop package, be able to type and have excellent communication skills. Graphic design skills an advantage.

Interested applicants write to:

Anna Obradovic

Security Mailing Services P/L

PO Box 86 Kingsgrove NSW 2208

C Now complete the table below.

What was required in the advertisement	What Darko wrote in his letter
Essential criteria Technical skills	Essential criteria Technical skills
Personal skills	Personal skills
Desirable criteria	Desirable criteria

D How effectively did Darko respond to the advertisement above?

Activity 6

- Read this covering letter and job advertisement.
- Analyse the letter using the checklist. Are any stages missing?
- Number the paragraphs in a different order to make the letter more logical and cohesive.
- How would you change the letter to use more formal language?
- Rewrite the letter, also correcting any spelling and/or formatting errors.

CLERICAL ASSISTANT

A leading northern districts motor dealer has a vacancy for a clerical assistant aged 18-20 years. Word processing skills and driving licence are required for this position, which involves frequent customer contact and associated clerical functions.

Apply in writing to Mr Paul Clarke,
Paul Clarke Auto Centre,
124 Seymour Road, PARRAMATTA 2150

63 Carnation Avenue
BANKSTOWN 2200
20th August 2009

Mr Paul Clarke
Paul Clarke Auto Centre
124 Seymour Road
PARRAMATTA 2150

Dear Mr Clarke

Re: Application for clerical assistant

This is a letter of application for the position of clerical assistant, advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on Monday, 17th August.

As a result of my training and experience, these are the skills I can offer you: sound key board skills (35 wpm), word processing ability using MS Word, as well as familiarity with general office procedures and bookkeeping.

I gained these skills whilst undertaking a Clerical Skills course and doing work experience with Parramatta TAFE. Here I was responsible for answering the telephone and over the counter enquiries, using word processing skills to produce letters and reports and general clerical duties such as filling, photocopying and sending facsimiles.

The attached resume will provide you with more detailed information about my background.

I am 19 years old and have held a driver's licence for the past year.

I would welcome the opportunity of dealing with customers. I am outgoing and friendly and my ability to relate easily to people would enable me to contribute to the smooth functioning of your company.

With the above mentioned clerical and people skills, I believe I would fit in well with your organisation.

I look forward to discussing my application with you. I can be contacted on 727 6522 at any time

Yours sincerely

Anahid Ali

Anahid Ali

Activity 7

- Complete the following covering letter. There may be several possible answers.
- Check the text for punctuation, spelling and any other errors.

Mr Jane Smith
ABC Widgets Corp
22 Hassell St
Parramatta NSW 3150

Dear Ms Jane

Re: Positions Graduate programmers

I would like _____ be considered for one of _____ positions of Graduate programmers that your company advertised in Sydney Morning Herald off 22 may. Please _____ enclosed a résumé with full details of _____ qualifications, interests and work experience.

I am a _____ arrived systems engineer from Russia with _____ than 5 years experience using Uniz and C++ in the manufacturing field, most notable in the area _____ farm machinery production. This experience includes coding and testing _____ inventory control system for the VAX platform and writing an electronic mail system using TCP/IP for _____ global Internet access for _____ state-run enterprise, Agco, a major _____ of farm plant equipment Eastern Europe.

As a Team Leader with this _____ My responsibilities _____ the implementation of new networking technologies and training _____ end users The changes were successful and full operating ahead _____ schedule.

I _____ a Bachelor of Computing Science _____ the University of Moscow and _____ currently _____ in a Masters of Project Planning studies at the University of NSW, a course I _____ to complete at the end of the coming year. I have _____ undertaken a _____ of profesional training courses. The full details of _____ are listed in attached _____

I am a highly _____ individual with good communication and the _____ to work _____ in a team environment. These attributes, coupled _____ the experience you _____ indicated you _____ seeking make _____ an ideal candidate for one _____ your positions.

Activity 8

Read the letter and discuss with a partner how you would edit this draft.

Brian Skelton
12/15 Creek Street
ASHFIELD NSW 2131
21 Oct 09
PH:9347 8920

Quality Manager
PO Box 174
LAKEMBA 2640

Dear Sir

I would like to apply for the position of Quality Assurance Trainee which was advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on October 18 2009.

I hold a Bachelor degree in Engineering for Leeds University. These qualifications have been acceted by the Institution of Engineers Australia and I am a graduate member.

Please find enclosed my résumé giving details of my background and achievements.

I have 25 years experience in the field of QA specialising in high capacity steam generators where I have been responsible for carrying out assessments on quality systems and the manufacturing capabilities of suppliers making various types of products in accordance with NTPC supplier qualification systems. Although I have not had any experience in Australia, I feel that i could cope with the australian working environment very well as I am flexible and adaptable in my approach. As your company is very similar to my previous employer, working with you would enable me to develop my professinal skills and knowledge of the Australian situation in a very short time.

I am very interested in working with your company as it would give me the opportunity to utilise my extensive experience. I believe that I have very good interpersonal and communication skills.

With my skills and experience I believe I could make a significant contribution to you company.

I trust that you will consider my application favourably and would be very grateful of the opportunity to discuss my background with you further at an interview time convenient to you. I can be contacted on 9347 8920 if you need to discuss in more detail your requirements for this position.

Yours faithfully

Brian Skelton

QUALITY ASSURANCE TRAINEE

APN is a leader in the design and manufacture of packaging products. We are seeking a recent engineering graduate to assist our QA Manager. You will need the following skills:

- computer literacy
- ability to communicate with people at all levels
- excellent analytical ability
- be self motivated and enthusiastic

Written applications should be forwarded to:
QA Manager, APN Pty Ltd, PO Box174
LAKEMBA 2640. Tel: 9758 6547

Relating qualifications and experience to a specific job advertisement

The covering letters in this section show how job applicants have related their qualifications and experience to the requirements of the position in various ways. The final draft of each letter is the result of preparation, research, an in-depth analysis of the advertisement and the use of appropriate formal language arranged in cohesive, easy-to-read paragraphs.

Activity 9

- Read each letter and its accompanying job advertisement.
- Analyse the job advertisements by underlining or highlighting the essential and desirable requirements.
- Use the checklist on page 14 for each cover letter.
- In groups discuss how successfully each letter responds to the job advertisement.

Advertisement 1

Young Engineers
MANAGEMENT CAREER PATH
EXPERENCED GRADUATES
PACKAGE INCL.CO.CAR

This well known Australian multinational with a solid record of achievement in the building and construction industry needs Civil or Mechanical Engineers to train as **FUTURE BUSINESS MANAGERS**. Comprehensive training will be provided during your settling in period.

As a candidate you are likely to have at least three years of relevant work experience. You will already have a flair for handling people at all levels and a strength of purpose in getting results, a leader/manager with potential. You are prepared to work hard and willing to be posted interstate on your way to the top. This is an opportunity with high career potential.

If this is you, call GRAHAM NEILSON
on 9526 3600 to express your interest.
Level 12, 60 Margaret St, Sydney NSW 2000
E: g.neilson@recruitco.com.au

Letter 1

240 Macombe Avenue
Ashfield NSW 2131
Ph: 0418 563 245

Mr Graham Neilson
EPR Consultancy
Level 12, 60 Margaret St
Sydney NSW 2000

3 August 2009

Dear Mr Neilson

Re: Position for Civil Engineer

Following our phone conversation this morning I would like to confirm my interest in the position of Civil Engineer advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on 29 July 2009.

I am approaching you with the knowledge that I can offer self motivation, enthusiasm, and the drive to work hard ability to work efficiently and effectively with people more than four years' experience in the fields of construction project management and master plan preparation.

My previous responsibilities as a civil engineer included construction management of diversified kinds of projects where time, quality and cost were the main considerations. I achieved significant success in completing the projects within stipulated times and budgets.

During my career, I developed excellent working relationships with my executive management, those working under my leadership, other personnel and government authorities and I was able to communicate effectively with them. This included conducting periodical coordination meetings with the main contractors as well as liaising with other agencies involved in the projects. As a project engineer, I was also responsible for obtaining government approval, arranging for inspections by utility authorities and regularly reported the overall progress of the projects directly to my Directors.

I have enclosed a copy of my résumé for further details.

With my strong background in the construction industry and project management as well as my ability to relate well to people at all levels, I believe I would make a valuable contribution to your client's company.

I would be happy to attend an interview at any time convenient to you. I can be contacted on 0418 563 245.

Yours sincerely

Nagim Lahoud

Nagim Lahoud

Read and comment on how Juan Ronaldo wrote about his limited work experience in paragraph 4.

Letter 2

65 Smith St
Hurstville NSW 2220
Ph: 0411 235 126

Mr Gordon Wells
Recruitment Officer
D3 Recruitment Agency
Fax No: 9708 4466

Dear Mr Wells

Re: Application for the position of Accounts Clerk

Following our telephone conversation yesterday I would like to apply for the position REF#smhO10 as advertised in the SMH of 24 October 2009.

I have a bachelor degree in accounting from Inca Garcilaso de la Vega University, Lima, Peru. Last year I completed my studies in Advanced Diploma of Accounting, including Bookkeeping and Financial Skills, at Petersham TAFE.

I have 10 years' experience in the field of Accounting as an Assistant Accountant and Accountant in various manufacturing companies. I was responsible for high volume daily accounting operations which included accounts payable and receivable. I have also had experience in using spreadsheets and journal processing.

Although I have limited working experience in Australia – two weeks work experience only in the financial area of the NSW Office of Public Works and Services, located in Bankstown. This experience has given me valuable skills and an understanding of the Australian workplace, and I received a performance certificate from the department to that effect. It was an enjoyable experience in a friendly environment.

With my skills and experience and my flexible approach I believe I could make a significant contribution to this company. I have attached my résumé to give further details about my background.

I would like to meet with you in person to discuss this or future positions at an interview time convenient to you.

I can be contacted on 0411 235 126.

Yours sincerely

Juan Ronaldo

Juan Ronaldo

ADVERTISEMENT 2

Accounts Clerk

City To 38k +super

Excellent opportunity to join this busy, friendly financial institution. The successful candidate will have extensive exp. in high volume reconciliation, accounts payable, journal processing and spreadsheets. Prior bookkeeping exp. highly regarded. For immediate start, Call D3 now!

Ph: 9708 5566

Fax: 9708 4466 REF#smh010

Member RSCA

Read paragraph 5 in this covering letter. Discuss how Tony has:

- related his qualifications and experience to the job ad
- used his unskilled work positively
- stressed what he can do for the employer

Letter 3

17/2B Bank Street
Meadowbank NSW 2114

7 June 2009

Mr Jack Mathews
Mathews Sachs & Co
PO Box 303
Bondi Junction NSW 1355

Dear Mr Mathews

Re: Position of Accountant

I would like to apply for the position of Accountant as advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on 5 June 2009.

As my enclosed résumé shows, I completed a Bachelor of Commerce Degree at Macquarie University last year and also completed an Advanced Diploma in Accounting in 2006.

I am very eager to work as an accountant. I realised when I came here that it would be essential to retrain, even though I had four years' experience in accounting in China. I chose to gain a local qualification because I wished to resume my career here in the accounting field. I feel I have well-developed analytical skills, a good eye for detail and an ability to meet strict deadlines.

My recent accounting study has given me confidence and ability in using computers with specialist knowledge in computer-based accounting. I am very familiar with accounting packages such as Attache 7, ACCPAC, MYOB, as well as spreadsheets (MS Excel).

You will see from my résumé that I have held a number of unskilled jobs both before and while at university. These jobs gave me a good understanding of a variety of Australian workplaces, helped to improve my language ability and develop the flexibility necessary to work successfully with Australians or people from other cultural backgrounds.

Australia has become a key travel destination for Chinese people, which is why I am very interested in joining a company in the travel industry where my knowledge of China and fluency in Mandarin would be an advantage.

I would be very pleased to attend an interview at any time and can be contacted on 02 9808 5038.

Yours sincerely

TKwok

Tony Kwok

ADVERTISEMENT 3 ACCOUNTANT

Travel agency near Town Hall. Proficiency in MYOB, Excel & Sabre an advantage. Career position in a rapidly expanding group of companies.

Post résumé to:

Jack Mathews
Mathews Sachs & Co
PO Box 303
Bondi Junction NSW 1355

Underline the words or phrases used in this covering letter which convey a positive and confident attitude.

Letter 4

ADVERTISEMENT 4
**Wanted
Experienced
SALES REPRESENTATIVE**

Ms Alicia Fuentes
20 Rochford Street in
Erskineville NSW 2043

2 August 2009

Ms Chrys Patsalos
www.sumrecruit.com

Dear Ms Patsalos

I would like to apply for the position of Sales Representative advertised in www.seek.com on 2 August 2009.

I have more than fifteen years of varied experience in the real estate field in Caracas, Venezuela and this has given me the opportunity to understand that excellent customer service, public relations, strong communication skills and team support are requirements for maintaining the standards of any company involved in sales.

As you can see in my attached résumé, I managed a portfolio of 250 to 300 properties. My responsibilities included sales, strata management and rental. I sold between 15 to 20 units per month ranging in price from \$A250,000 to \$A1million.

I have excellent organisational and communication skills. I assessed customer needs, quoted and negotiated prices, and reported back to my supervisor. I also have a broad range of clerical and administrative skills and am proficient in using MS OfficeXP.

I am an English and Spanish speaker, am ambitious, career-oriented and energetic, and have a keen interest in becoming associated with and contributing to the growth of any company.

After reading your requirements for the position, I am confident of my ability to provide you with the experience and quality of performance you expect. Should you be interested in my application, I would be pleased to attend an interview at any time and can be contacted on 0438 572 573.

Yours sincerely

A Fuentes

Alicia Fuentes

Writing speculative letters

Activity 10

As 70% of available jobs are never advertised, it is an effective job search strategy to write speculative or *cold canvass* letters to employers for whom you would like to work. The most important point to remember when writing speculative letters, is to follow them up with a phone call. Employers would very rarely respond to one of these letters, unless you call them directly to speak to them about it. It is therefore a good idea to mention in your letter that you will be calling them in the next week to discuss any potential opportunities.

In small groups discuss how Stephen has written this *on spec* letter.

- What information is conveyed in the first paragraph?
- Which part of the letter is the most convincing?

UNIT 4: COVERING LETTERS

Ms Kelly Brown
Human Resource Manager
Nepean Hospital
29 Ink Street
Penrith NSW 2750

Dear Ms Brown

My name is Stephen Thompson and I am looking for work with a large hospital where I can utilise my experience and further my interests in the health promotion field. Please accept this letter as my application for a position at Nepean Hospital.

I hold a Bachelor of Arts (Communication Studies) degree, with my main areas of study in public relations, journalism and health promotion. As part of this degree, I was involved in a promotions campaign for the Wentworth Area Health Service. Working in a team of three, I was responsible for producing a brochure and poster (using QuarkXPress) and preparing press releases for both local and metropolitan newspapers.

My computer skills include Microsoft Office as well as a number of desktop publishing packages including QuarkXPress and InDesign. I enjoy working to deadlines and the challenge of working on a number of projects at one time. My strengths lie in my ability to focus on tasks and pay attention to minor details, as shown by my excellent university results and the High Distinction I received for the Wentworth Health Service assignment mentioned above.

The newspapers have reported on the fact that Nepean Hospital has been given a grant by the State Government to promote health awareness in the Greater Western Area's 45+ aged population. When you think about putting together a team to work on this project I hope you will consider me. I believe that my enthusiasm for this area of the industry, my experience working in a team to produce quality promotional material, and my ability to liaise with health professionals, government officials and the media make me an excellent candidate.

I have attached my résumé and a sample of my desktop publishing for your further information. I am available for an interview at your convenience and will telephone you on Wednesday of next week to discuss the possibility of working either on this project or in any suitable area at the Nepean Hospital.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Thompson

S. Thompson

Enc: 2 brochures

Writing covering letters in email applications

More and more employers are requesting that applications and résumés be sent by email. The email covering letter has the same function as a covering letter sent by post. However there are some differences.

- There is no need to begin your message with your contact details as these are in your résumé.
- Keep sentences under 35 words and write in short paragraphs.
- Keep information to one screen of text.
- Send cover letter as an attachment if you must convey more information.
- Proofread your text to make sure it is still professionally presented.
- Do not forget to attach your résumé.

Date: Thursday, 9 October 2009 14:20 AM
To: a.smith@worldpublishers.com.au
From: Sally Rodgers [s.rodgers@ozemail.com.au]
Subject: Position R/N 2.10.09
Cc:
Attachments: SRodgers_Resume.doc

GRADUATE OPPORTUNITY — PUBLISHER SERVICE
Position: R/N 2.10.09

Dear Mr Smith

I wish to apply for the above position advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on Saturday, 4 October 2009.

I graduated with a Bachelor of Business (Marketing) degree from the University of Western Sydney in 2008 and have been working part-time as an administration manager for a busy, customer-focused recruitment consultancy for the past six months. My duties include maintaining the company database, liaising with major clients and working closely with the Account Executive.

I would welcome the opportunity to work with World Publishers within their Network Distribution Company. I have excellent spoken and written communication skills and have experience in working in a variety of customer service industries. I believe that my marketing degree and genuine desire to work in the media/publishing industry in a marketing-related role make me a suitable candidate for this position.

My résumé is attached for further information and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

Sally Ann Rodgers

Activity 11

Form a small group and discuss the assessment criteria in this grid.

Competency: Can write a covering letter to accompany résumé.

Performance criteria	Achieved
a uses appropriate staging	
b prepares appropriate attachments, eg: enclosure addressing criteria	
c demonstrates suitability for the position sought	
d writes coherent and logically-structured paragraphs	
e links ideas cohesively and logically by using appropriate references and conjunctions	
f uses vocabulary and grammatical structures appropriate to level of formality and technicality	

Activity 12 Assessment task

Find an appropriate job advertisement. Prepare a covering letter. You could use the models of covering letters and the glossary at the end of this module to assist you in the process. You could also visit the following website for more information: www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/Jobs+&+Careers/Applying+for+jobs/Sample+resumes+&+cover+letters/.

Your teacher will assess your letter using the assessment criteria in Learning Outcome E3. Make sure you give a copy of the advertisement to your teacher.

Answers

ACTIVITY 3

- 8 No/Street
Suburb State Postcode
- Email
Fax (if applicable)
Phone/Mobile no
- 2 Date
- 3 Name of person to whom you are sending this letter
- 14 Title of this person
Company or business name
- 10 Address (or mailing address) of the company
Suburb State Postcode
- Person's email (if applicable)
Company's fax (if applicable)
- 1 Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms Surname or Sir/Madam
- 17 Re: Subject/Application for.....
- First paragraph*
- 16 refer to the job you are applying for, where and when it was advertised
including job reference number if stated
- Middle paragraphs/body of letter*
- The middle changes with each application. It should:
- 11 mention your qualifications, training, experience, technical and personal skills, relevant to the
- 12 job as advertised; this indicates that you know what the job actually involves, shows you meet
- 15 all the requirements listed and convinces the employer that you are interested and able to
do the job!
- 13 refer to your attached résumé for further information, academic transcripts and copies of
references (and anything else you have included with the letter)
indicate that you know something about the company's products and/or services
- Last paragraph*
- 18 re-express your interest in the job and why you are suitable
- 5 indicate that you are available for an interview at the employer's convenience
- 4 Yours sincerely (name known) OR Yours faithfully (Sir/Madam)
- 6 *Your signature*
- 7 Your name typed
- 9 Enc: academic transcripts and two references

UNIT 4: COVERING LETTERS

ACTIVITY 4

8 5/12 Hebersham Road
Mt Druitt NSW 2770

M: 0418 234 173

2 3 December 2009

3 Ms Sue Plateroti
14 Food Services Site Manager
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
10 Missenden Road
Camperdown NSW 2050

1 Dear Ms Plateroti

17 Re: Application for the position of Secretary in the Food & Services Department

16 Further to the telephone conversation I had with you yesterday concerning the above position as advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on November 29 2009, I am writing to confirm my interest in applying for the job.

With reference to the criteria mentioned in the advertisement, I would like to highlight my relevant skills and experience:

- 15 • 10 years' experience as a secretary using MS Office for office administration
- 11 • Typing speed 60wpm with 99% accuracy
- 12 • Accustomed to working as part of a multicultural team
- 12 • Able to work long flexible hours unsupervised
- 12 • Excellent communication skills in English

18 With my strong background in the secretarial field, as well as being a person from a non-English speaking background, I feel confident I can make a strong contribution to the department.

13 To aid you in assessing my capabilities, I have enclosed my résumé. I can be contacted
5 on the above-mentioned mobile number and am available for an interview at any time.

I hope to hear from you soon.

4 Yours sincerely

6 *SJ Bayad*

7 Salma Bayad

9 *(not needed as résumé referred to in letter)*

ACTIVITY 5

A Staging:

- no title of receiver
- no mention of personal skills
- no mention of availability for interview

B

DESKTOP SUPPORT

Are you bored with your secretarial/administrative duties?

Here is an excellent opportunity for an enthusiastic person with keen analytical skills and an eye for detail to gain entry into a Desktop Publishing role. Key responsibilities will include the scanning of logos, set-up of letters and forms and proofreading. Essentially you will have knowledge of MS Word and experience using a desktop package, be able to type and have excellent communication skills. Graphic design skills an advantage.

Interested applicants write to:

Anna Obradovic
Security Mailing Services P/L
PO Box 86 Kingsgrove NSW 2208

What was required in the advertisement	What Darko wrote in his letter
Essential criteria Technical skills - MS Word - desktop package - type Personal skills - communication skills Desirable criteria - graphic design skills	Essential criteria Technical skills - software packages - design layout - amending layout - graphic integration - scanning and merging - adjusting colour Personal skills - liaison - spoken and written Desirable criteria - designed fax cover and logo - prepared brochures and newsletters

UNIT 4: COVERING LETTERS

ACTIVITY 6

Main problems with the letter are:

- layout and spacing
- spelling mistakes/typos
- most sentences begin with I
- too short

ACTIVITY 7

Ms Jane Smith
ABC Widgets Corp
22 Hassell St
Parramatta NSW 2150

Dear Ms Smith

Re: Graduate Programmers Positions

I would like to be considered for one of the positions of Graduate Programmers that your company advertised in Sydney Morning Herald on 22 May. Please find enclosed a résumé with full details of my qualifications, interests and work experience.

I am a newly-arrived systems engineer from Russia with more than 5 years' experience using Unix and C++ in the manufacturing field, most notably in the area of farm machinery production. This experience includes coding and testing of inventory control system for the VAX platform and writing an electronic mail system using TCP/IP for global Internet access for a state-run enterprise, Agco, a major manufacturer/producer of farm plant equipment in/from Eastern Europe.

As a Team Leader with this company/organisation my responsibilities were the implementation of new networking technologies and training for end users. The changes were successful and fully operating ahead of schedule.

I have a Bachelor of Computing Science from the University of Moscow and am currently enrolled in a Masters of Project Planning studies at the University of NSW, a course I plan/intend/hope to complete by the end of the coming year. I have also undertaken a series/range of professional training courses. The full details of which are listed in my attached résumé.

I am a highly motivated individual with good communication skills and the ability/willingness to work well/effectively in a team environment. These attributes, coupled with the experience you have indicated you are seeking make me an ideal candidate for one of your positions.

Glossary for covering letters

Covering letters often contain standard phrases for each stage of the letter.
Here are some examples.

1 REFERRING TO PREVIOUS TELEPHONE CALLS

- 1A As discussed in our telephone conversation today, I am interested in applying for the position of [*a mechanical engineer*] which was advertised in [*The Age on 9 September 2009*].
- 1B Further to our telephone call on [*6 March*], I am writing to confirm my interest in applying for the position of [*Assistant Accountant*].
- 1C Further to our telephone call this morning regarding the position of [*a computer programmer*], I am sending my résumé as discussed.
- 1D With reference to my telephone call on [*6 March*], regarding the position of [*an Assistant Accountant*], I am sending my résumé for your consideration.
- 1E I refer to the telephone conversation I had with you concerning the position of [*an Accounts Clerk*] which was advertised in [*The Australian*] on [*23 September 2009*].
- 1F Following our telephone conversation this morning, I wish to confirm my interest in the position of [*Civil Engineer*] which was advertised in [*The Sydney Morning Herald on 29th July 2009*].

2 OPENING SENTENCE - interest in the position and source of the vacancy

- 2A I am very interested in the position of [*an Analyst/Programmer*] advertised in [*The Age of 29 August 2009*].
- 2B I would like to apply for the position of [*Senior Technical Officer*] advertised in [*The Sydney Morning on August 24th 2009*].
- 2C I am writing to express a keen interest in the position of [*a secretary*] advertised in the [*Courier Mail on 21 August 2009*].
- 2D I would like to apply for the position of [*Senior Technical Officer*] as advertised in [*The Sydney Morning on August 24 2009*].
- 2E I would like to forward my application for the position of [*an accountant*] advertised in [*The Australian on 30 June 2009*].
- 2F **Re: Position of Accountant, Reference No 333/94**

I would like to be considered for the above position which was advertised in [*the Courier Mail on 2nd July 2009*] and I enclose my résumé for your consideration.
- 2G **Re: Position of [an Electronics Engineer]** advertised in [*The Sydney Morning Herald, on 20 May 2010*].

I am attracted to the above position by its similarity to my previous job with a large international company [*ABC Pty Ltd*]. I am therefore sending my résumé for your consideration.

UNIT 4: COVERING LETTERS

I am writing to express my interest in the position you have advertised for [*an electrical Engineer*] in [*the Melbourne Age on 1 July 2009*].

3 RELATING EXPERIENCE

- 3A My experience with [*two international banks in Hong Kong*] has developed my knowledge and skills in [*the commercial lending area*]. This included [*credit analysis, risk management and financial analysis of loan portfolios*]. In addition [*I liaised with existing and potential clients*].
- 3B Apart from receiving excellent training in [*credit analysis and risk management*] I have also developed skills in [*the financial analysis of loan portfolios*].
- 3C My marketing experience includes [*maintaining liaison with existing and potential clients*].
- 3D Management of [*corporate accounts*] has given me wide exposure to [*various industries including manufacturing, services and construction*].
- 3E I am approaching you with four years' experience in the field of [*construction and project management*] and the knowledge that I can offer the following skills and experience:
- *self motivation, enthusiasm, and drive*
 - *ability to work efficiently and effectively with people*
- 3F With reference to the criteria mentioned in the advertisement I would like to highlight my relevant expertise:
- *Experience in servicing XXXX equipment*
 - *Basic programming skills including SQL, Java and VisualBasic*
 - *4 years' experience working in the maintenance and operation of multiplexIR and transmission line systems*
- 3G My previous responsibilities as a [*civil engineer*] included [*construction management of commercial and industrial buildings*] as well as [*roads and drainage*].
- 3H As a [*project engineer*] I was responsible for [*obtaining government approval and for arranging inspections of completed projects*].
- 3I As an [*analyst programmer*] I have two years' experience in the [*development, maintenance and support of financial applications software*]. During this period I successfully completed several projects including [*a merchant line credit system*].
- 3J My experience has encompassed [*the analysis and design of programs*] as well as [*systems testing*].
- 3K In addition to [*liaising with testers*], my position also entailed [*providing support in the post-production period*].
- 3L I have a degree in [*Computer Programming and Systems Analysis*] and ten years' experience in the [*telecommunications field*].
- 3M I have gained wide/extensive/considerable/a wide range of experience in the area of [*teaching ESL*] including ten years with [*the NSW AMES*].

- 3N In my previous position I played key roles in both [*designing and managing major projects*].
- 3O Being an accomplished [*accountant*] with [*6 years'*] experience in the field of [*taxation*], my responsibilities have included
- 3P While working with [*XYZ Pty Ltd*] I was involved in
- 3Q During my period with [*ABC Pty Ltd*] my work included
- 3R I have experience in using [*XXX machines*] as well as [*faxes, photocopiers*].
- 3S I am familiar with [*all Microsoft Office programs including MS Publisher and MS Access*].
- 3T My position as a [*computer programmer*] with [*SEA, England*] gave me [*two years*] of varied experience using [*Cobol language with Unix systems*].

4 PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- 4A I have excellent [*spoken and written communication skills*] as I was required not only to [*liaise with clients and colleagues, both locally and globally*], but also to [*present spoken and written reports to management*].
- 4B During my career I developed excellent working relationships with [*my executive management, those working under my leadership and government authorities*] and I was able to communicate effectively with them.

5 SUMMARY OF SUITABILITY: why you would be good for the position and knowledge of the company

- 5A Based on my sound experience with [*switchboard equipment*] and my background in [*the telecommunications industry*], I believe I would be capable of successfully carrying out the duties of the advertised position.
- 5B With my strong background in [*the construction industry and management of projects*] as well as my ability [*to relate to people at all levels*], I believe I would be able to make a valuable contribution to your/your client's company.
- 5C With my [*commercial lending background*] and other skills I have mentioned, I feel confident I can make a strong contribution to your bank.
- 5D Because of my background in [*project management of high rise construction*] I believe I am ideally suited for this position and I look forward to an early interview.
- 5E As I have had considerable experience in [*the design and maintenance of financial and banking software*] I feel I could fulfil your/your client's demands and therefore contribute to the growth of software sales and services.

UNIT 4: COVERING LETTERS

- 5F Because of my extensive knowledge and experience in the [*area of telecommunications*] I feel confident that I would be an asset to your organisation. For this reason I have enclosed a copy of my *résumé* for your consideration.
- 5G I feel I have [*a sound scientific base and many research skills*] which would be useful to you in your [*research program*].
- 5H My considerable expertise in [*design, project management and maintenance*] - the major requirements of the position - enables me to apply for this position with confidence.
- 6. AVAILABILITY FOR INTERVIEW, CONTACT INFORMATION AND MENTION OF ENCLOSED RÉSUMÉ**
- 6A I believe a meeting would affirm my suitability for the position. I can be reached on [*9876 9883 or 0412 325 589*] during the day.
- 6B I would be happy to attend an interview at any time convenient to you. For further information please contact me by writing to the above address or by telephone on [*(02) 9369 4808*] or by email at [*aperson10@bigpond.com.au*].
- 6C I have enclosed my *résumé* for your consideration. Should you be interested in my application I would be pleased to attend an interview at any time. I can be contacted on [*(02) 9348 4294*].
- 6D I would welcome an opportunity to discuss with you in detail the relevance of my experience in relation to your needs in an interview situation. I can be contacted at the above address or a message can be left on my answering machine on [*(02) 9728 2105*] or by email at [*aperson10@bigpond.com.au*].
- 6E A *résumé* giving my personal details, qualifications and work experience is enclosed. My contact number is [*9839 0498*] and my email address is [*darkodjukic@hotmail.com*].
- 6F Please contact me on [*9768 9654*] if you need any clarification of the accompanying *résumé*. I look forward to the opportunity of an interview.
- 6G To aid you in assessing my capabilities I have enclosed my *résumé*. I can be contacted on [*9394 0987*] and am available for an interview at any time.
- 6H I look forward to further discussing my application with you.
- 6I I enclose my *résumé* to support my application. I look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you in the near future when I would be able to discuss my background in greater detail. I can be contacted on [*9644 5467*] or by email at [*jrenaldo@bigpond.net.au*].
- 6J Should you wish to discuss my application, I am available for an interview at any time and can be contacted on [*9870 987*] or by email at [*jrenaldo@bigpond.net.au*]. My *résumé* is enclosed for your consideration.

7 COLD CANVASSING

- 7A I am a recently arrived [*occupation*] and am currently seeking employment in the [*field/area/industry*]. My inquiries have revealed that [*name of company*] is a leader in this field and a major employer of [*occupation*]. I have therefore taken the liberty of writing to you to register my interest in any employment opportunities that might arise in your company in the intermediate future.
- 7B I am a recently-arrived [civil engineer] with over [*X*] years' experience in the field of [*high rise construction*] and am currently seeking employment in the [*building*] industry. [*A friend/A professional associate/A fellow member of the Institute of Engineers*], [*name of person*], suggested I contact you on this matter.
- 7C Please contact me should my services ever be required, or if you could recommend any other suitable place of employment. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

8 INTRODUCE YOURSELF

- 8A I am a recently arrived [engineer] from [*Chile*] and am currently seeking employment in the [*civil engineering*] field, in particular in the area of [*bridge construction*]. My inquiries in this industry have revealed that [*JJJ Engineering*] is a leader in this field and a major employer of people with my skills. I have therefore taken the liberty of writing to you to register my interest in any employment opportunities that might arise in your company in the intermediate future.
- 8B I am [*an industrial chemist*] with over [*7 years'*] experience in the field of [*paint products*]. I have recently arrived in Australia from [*Indonesia*] and am currently seeking employment in the [*paint industry*]. [*Bill Jones, Senior Chemist with ICI Australia*] suggested that I contact you on this matter.
- 8C I would very much appreciate it if you could file my interest and availability, and notify me should any vacancy occur. I can be contacted on [*(02) 1234 5678*] or by email at [*sbayad@iinet.com.au*] and am available at any time to further discuss my situation and skills.
- 8D Please contact me should a position arise, or if you could recommend any other suitable place of employment. Thank you for your attention to this matter.