The German Cover Letter

➤ Please note: In most cases, speaking and understanding German is essential for applying successfully in Germany.

What should a German Cover Letter contain?

Formal requirements
- Name, address, email
- Correct company address and contact person
- Date
- Subject line highlighted (without the title “Subject”), name the position you apply for and possibly the place of publication of the job offer
- Salutation, same as in the address bar (address the contact person)
- Short statements with an understandable sentence structure and clear typeface
- Structural sections
- Name (handwritten without subline)
- Attachments (possibly name them)

Length
Basically, as short as possible, not longer than one page.

Content
- **Introduction (3-4 lines)**
  Make a reference, create suspense, convey interest, express friendliness (did you already have contact to the company? Why (please specific) are you particularly qualified for the position advertised?)

- **Main Part (10-12 lines)**
  Why (please specific) is your experience or knowledge a good match for the job offered? (background, studies, other relevant qualifications for the job) Why are you the right person for the job? (“Lock-key system”)

- **Closure (3-4 lines)**
  Why (please specific) are you interested in this company / the position advertised? If required in the application you can add your desired entry date and salary expectations.
  Polite sentence with reference to a possible job interview.

Generally
Write the letter as if you have aligned your whole life to get this very position in the company!
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What mistakes should you avoid?

- Giving company emails or phone numbers, or unserious email addresses as your contact information
- Lack of text structure
- Too long sentences, mistakes, wrong typeface
- Technical jargon
- Multi-page cover letter
- “You can call me anytime”
- “Quotes” from the job advertisement (“You are looking for a young, highly motivated…”)
- Good intentions (“If you hire me, then…”)
- Prophecies (“Because… I am absolutely certain to live up to all conditions of this management task.”)