

Writing supporting statements (or cover letters)

Recruiters often ask for applicants to submit a supporting statement (or covering letter) to accompany a CV. The terms 'supporting statement' and 'covering letter' are often used interchangeably and we would advise presenting it as a statement rather than a letter format.

The purpose of the supporting statement is to demonstrate how your skills and experience match the requirements outlined in the person specification. It also provides a good opportunity for you to summarise your reasons for applying for the position and for wanting to work for that particular charity.

Unless instructed otherwise it is usually a good idea to use the points in the person specification as headings and answer each of them in turn. Assess yourself against the selection criteria, substantiating each point with specific examples of your skills, knowledge and experience. In considering your experience, remember all your previous employment, as well as any other interests & voluntary work, and draw on this to demonstrate that you have the necessary skills. Remember to make clear what you did.

An Example:

Strong communication skills, both written and verbal

I have excellent communication skills. I am a confident public speaker and regularly make presentations on the work of the charity to large groups of people, including schools & local community groups. I also liaise frequently with donors on an individual basis, both over the phone and in written correspondence and I am the first point of contact for any general enquires to the fundraising team. I have a clear and concise telephone manner and enjoy advising and supporting donors with any queries they might have. I have strong written skills and as well as including clear and concise information about the charity in day to day correspondence to donors, I regularly submit articles for both departmental quarterly mailings and the fundraising newsletter.

Finally...

Do

- Remember to include your name and the post you are applying for.
- Keep it to 1-2 sides of A4.
- Read through and remember to check for errors.

Don't

- Just copy and paste the whole thing from another application. While the majority of content can be re-used it's good to tailor each one to the specific role.
- Leave it until the last minute!

We are always on hand with advice while you are writing your statement. If you are able to get it over to us in time we will happily read through it and will get back to you with any suggestions/comments.