Cover Letter That Gets Read — Cheat Sheet

Bonus one-pager for uniquestoremarket.com's “How to Write a Cover Letter That Gets Read” guide

The method in five steps

1. **Know what the letter is for (Ch. 1)** — the CV lists what you did; the letter explains why it matters for this job. Delete anything that only repeats the CV. Target: 200–300 words, four short paragraphs.
2. **Mine the ad for three things (Ch. 2)** — weight the first third of the ad, what is repeated in different words, and what the job title promises. Tools and software belong on the CV.
3. **Fill the four paragraphs (Ch. 3)** — Hook (2–3 sentences), Proof (3–5, one story with a number), Fit (2–3, only true for this company), Ask (1–2, a plain request plus your availability).
4. **Write an opening only this job could get (Ch. 4)** — name their problem, lead with your most relevant number, or open with a specific observation about their product or market.
5. **Cut, proof, tailor (Ch. 5)** — cut about 20% without removing a paragraph. Proof is the reusable part; Hook and Fit get rewritten for every application.

Do this week

- Strip your last letter of every sentence that only repeats the CV, then write one sentence naming what this letter must prove (Ch. 1).
- Highlight problem and responsibility sentences in your real target ad and write down exactly three requirements, in priority order (Ch. 2).
- Draft Hook, Proof, Fit and Ask in that order; check Proof has exactly one story and at least one number (Ch. 3).
- Write all three opening types and pick the one that fails the “could this be reused” test (Ch. 4).
- Cut 20%, then run the three pre-send checks and save as FirstnameLastname-CoverLetter-Company.pdf (Ch. 5).

Watch out for

- Opening with “I am writing to apply for the position of X” — roughly nine in ten letters do, and it tells the reader nothing new (Ch. 4).
- Answering all twelve bullets in turn: it reads like a form and proves nothing (Ch. 2).
- A wrong or misspelled company name — the most common fatal error in the entire process (Ch. 5).
- A Fit paragraph that would still be true for a competitor (Ch. 3).

Full guide: uniquestoremarket.com/write-a-cover-letter-that-gets-read