

A good application is condensed time

In an application coaching, a client showed me his motivation letter—a densely written page without visible structure, with narrow margins, and without the recipient's address, sender's details, and subject. He had only spent 15 minutes composing it. What do you think: How much time would I have had to invest to read and understand this letter?

Peter Näf

I estimate the time required to be at least 10 minutes, assuming no interruptions; however, with the inevitable disruptions in a daily work routine, it would likely take 20-30 minutes—time that nobody has available.

Another example: My most talented applicant to date was the Head of Communications for a large company. As a skilled communication professional, he needed about two hours for his motivation letters. In comparison, these comprised only about a quarter of the text, had a comprehensible argumentation, and were neatly structured. I could read and understand them in two minutes without any difficulty.

What is the difference between these two motivation letters? Compressed time!

Good communication is time-consuming...

Journalist Constantin Seibt describes the commodity of journalism as compressed time and succinctly puts it in his book «Deadline» as follows: «When I, as a journalist, have the basic facts for an article, I expect to write at a pace of 1000 characters per hour. You read these 1000 characters in just under a minute.»

This can be applied to the creation of job application documents. It also becomes evident that a significant part of the work occurs before writing the motivation letter: engaging with the position

and one's own aspirations and needs; compiling the basic facts. And during the writing process, applicants further refine their thoughts as they struggle with the wording.

Therefore, consider the job application not as a burdensome task but as a valuable time in which you sharpen your professional profile.

...and shows respect for the recipients

The same applies to your entire job application documents. In the preparation of an application coaching, it sometimes takes me up to fifteen minutes to understand a client's application reasonably well. I have to reconstruct the applicant's profile using the resume, motivation letter, and certificates—a true puzzle game. Yet, many questions often remain unanswered.

If you were a salesperson trying to sell an expensive investment, you would never burden your customer with this work! And be aware: as a job applicant, you are also an expensive investment for companies.

Hence, a fundamental principle applies to job applications: The time you save through a careless approach burdens recruiters with additional work. This is, of course, under the assumption that they are willing to invest the time!

Or, to express it in the words of the doyen of the German language, Wolf Schneider: «Someone always has to struggle—either the writer or the reader.» And despite a shortage of skilled workers, I strongly advise against burdening recruiters.

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