

MOTIVATION LETTER – MORE THAN A COVER LETTER

The letter as part of the application dossier

The motivation letter or application letter is part of the written application documents, along with the CV and certificates. Many applicants regard it as a mere cover letter. They pay correspondingly little attention to it. Thus, they miss an opportunity, since the application letter is an independent communication instrument in the application process. The CV provides a tabular overview of the applicant's career to date. The content of the motivation letter, on the other hand, is why the applicant is interested in the position. In addition, they describe the most important professional experiences that are job-relevant. So, it is not necessary to recount the whole CV in prose. Let's compare the application documents with marketing instruments from the sale of products or services. In this picture, the CV corresponds to a product brochure for a general overview. The application letter in turn can be seen as a tailor-made offer.

What makes a good motivation letter?

As the term motivation letter indicates, the application letter should say something about the motivation for the application. In the majority of them, the relevant information is either missing or exhausted in empty phrases. «I am looking for a new challenge and would like to contribute my experience» is a typical phrase. Most applicants assume that they only have to show that they have the skills for the job. Motivation is just as important for good performance and job satisfaction in the long term. If an applicant is not sufficiently interested in the position, there is a risk that he/she will resign early. Unwanted fluctuations are very expensive for companies. A good motivation letter requires that applicants have dealt intensively with the position and the company. Since it has to be rewritten every time (no copy paste!), it is the most time-consuming part of the written application.