

How to Cover Yourself Without the Letter

12.17.2014 | posted by camilleb | [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#) [Facebook](#) [Email](#)

There are a lot of ways for you to get an employer's attention. There are also a lot of requirements to a job application. One of them is the dreaded cover letter, where you have to explain in letter format why you're the right person for the job. Of course, to make things complicated, you're not even sure if they'll like the cut of your jib when you write it. It feels like you're throwing a paper airplane blindly against the wind. Perhaps it's time you look at other ways to get yourself to stand out without needing to write letter after letter.

□

What it's like to be ignored

You may feel ignored whenever you get no response from your application, but rest assured that your cover letter has it much worse. Fortune cites a survey by Phil Rosenberg of reCareered in which he uncovered that 90 percent of all hiring managers, human resource representatives and recruiters [ignore cover letters](#), while 97 percent determine whether to advance an application to further stages by just the resume alone. That basically means a lot of how you sell yourself is built more on a polished resume than a letter that keeps going on about you.



None of these people looked at your letter.

The reason for this is the wonder of technology. Most companies, especially those that do online applications, have an applicant tracking system that reads the resumes and other materials for them. Many a resume, no doubt including yours, has been trashed because of missing keywords, not hitting the magic number of years of experience or using words you didn't know you were supposed to include. These systems tend not to care for the cover letter because it's an essay that's required to be read by a human. Yet even with this filtration system in place, HR managers are likely overwhelmed and can't read your letter. Unless the job specifically requests the cover letter, don't write one.

A megaphone on a soapbox

Now that you feel liberated from such tedium, what do you do instead to impress your employers? Content marketer Come Recommended suggests the first thing you do is make [a targeted resume each time you apply](#). That makes things tedious again, but the point is that you're trying to create something that appeals directly to the employer. Creating a single resume for every

job application, even if the qualifications don't quite match, will likely net you few bites. However, if you customize it enough with the right keywords and content, you'll be able to clear the ATS hurdle easily.

Of course, you may also need to talk about yourself a little. That's where storytelling comes in. If you think the company will be okay with it, write a story about yourself that highlights your abilities, talents and personality, and use that instead of a cover letter. Such creative thinking will get people's attention quickly.

However, there's one thing that's more effective than the most polished resume or the second greatest story ever told: a referral or recommendation. Building up your network to have contacts within the employer you're looking to join can quickly result in you getting a call for an interview.

[Contact](#) | [Blog](#) | [Add Your Resume](#)

[Privacy](#) | [Terms of Use](#)

Copyright True North Recruiting. All Right Reserved.

Design and Development by GILES PARSCALE.

