

# How To Write a Cover Letter

The purpose of a cover letter is straightforward: to convince the people reading it that YOU are the right person for the job! While this How To can't guarantee that you'll be accepted every time you apply, it will give some general tips to improve your cover letters for future events.

## What to include?

Cover letters for events should generally be kept short. Unlike a cover letter for a conventional job opening, you don't need to include an extensive pitch or an excessive delve into your background. You don't even need to include your contact information--JudgeApps automatically includes that information. Do include a basic summary of your experience, goals, and needs. Also, make sure you actually answer all the questions called for in the application. Read the Event Information carefully to make sure you address all requested information.

## Experience, Goals, and Needs

Everyone writes cover letters a little differently, but successful cover letters often include these common elements: your experience judging, your goals for the event, and any special needs you have.

If you choose to use this structure, you can write a cover letter that simply consists of three paragraphs that are explicitly titled Experience, Goals, and Needs. This is an easy way of ensuring that the Judge Manager can find exactly what they're looking for in your application.

- Experience:
  - Provide a summary of your experience judging: number of GPs, PPTQs, or other events; involvement in judge projects and conferences; and, if you're working on levelling up, what progress you've made. If you're just getting started, supplement your story with the names of the judge certified you and/or other judges you've worked for in the past (ask them for permission first!)
  - Humbly but confidently state any particular strengths, skills, or perspectives you bring to the event. Focus on things that most other judges cannot provide, such as proficiency with a foreign language, specialized knowledge from working on a Judge project, or professional skills that you can transfer to judging from another career.
  - Use this section to emphasize what you *can* do for an event. Your needs and goals have their own sections.
- Goals:
  - Articulate specific, measurable, realistic goals for the event. This demonstrates your dedication to self-improvement. It also makes it more likely you will be staffed in a position that will help you meet your target.
  - Be honest about your proficiency with the areas you're targeting. Some tasks, particularly on the main event at GPs, can put judges under tremendous pressure. Make it clear if you are taking first steps and aren't ready for a sink-or-swim role.
- Needs:
  - If you have a medical condition, food allergy, or travel limitation that is relevant to your ability to serve on staff, you should disclose those for consideration. Putting

these requirements into a paragraph labeled “Needs” is a good way of making sure the Judge Manager can’t miss them when reviewing your application.

## Other things to consider

Your profile picture pops up when scrolling over your application in JudgeApps. If you haven’t already done so, take a profile picture in professional judge attire such as black judge shirt, black dress shirt, or judge polo. Your face should be clearly visible and you should look like you normally look at events.

A cover letter is your first impression when applying to an event. Typos and grammatical issues appear unprofessional and make Judge Managers question the level of attention to detail you’ll bring to their event. Take the extra minute to make sure everything looks correct before pressing submit.

## What if I’m not being accepted?

First of all, reflect on why you may have been declined. Perhaps your application could have been improved, or maybe your experience level wasn’t yet in line with the type of event you were applying for. It is extremely unlikely that your application was denied due to personal reasons, so try to not take it personally.

If you’re still not sure, consider asking the Judge Manager or RC if they have any feedback on your application. Perhaps the style or content of your cover letter could be improved. Judging is a constant quest for self-improvement, and improving applications to events is no exception.

Regardless of whether you were accepted or not, please refrain from sharing your acceptance status on social media or the JudgeApps forums. If your application was accepted, sharing this can come across as insensitive to those who were declined. Likewise, posting about being declined will often be perceived negatively by others. Saying nothing is the most professional and courteous option.