

SPECULATIVE COVERING LETTER

Speculative (direct) applications to a potential employer are simply applications made when an organisation is not advertising roles. They can be a useful way to engage with the un-advertised, so called, 'hidden' job market, whether it's a full or part time job you want. It's quite okay for you to approach companies directly if you think they may have a need for additional workers.

For example, you can send a speculative application because you have noticed that a company is expanding, perhaps opening a new office, or you may have heard that they have just gained a new contract. Alternatively, you may decide to send a speculative application because you are 'testing the water' to see whether they are likely to have any opportunities coming up that might just suit your skills or experience.

You can get ideas on organisations to approach from a range of sources, including Web or TV features/news, or your personal contacts. It's also quite feasible to target companies in a specific region because you have a need to live in that area and understandably are looking for employment there.

Top Tip - keep speculative letters short and focused, likewise your accompanying CV. Often a one page 'highlights' CV will suffice. Remember, as the organisation is not advertising, the recipient of your letter is doing you a favour by even reading it and your CV!

Who should I send it to? Unless you want to work in HR, it's often best to send speculative letters directly to specific contacts/managers (outside of recruitment or HR, as these functions act as gatekeepers/filters). Departmental managers may also have a clearer idea of immediate job/work requirements than HR staff.

Your Address, etc.

Mr P Egan
Retail Manager
FancyRags
Queen Street
Oxford, OX1 2AB

Dear Mr Egan,

I read with interest the recent report in the Oxford Times describing the forthcoming completion of FancyRags newest retail outlet in the city centre. It looks like a great opportunity for your business and I am writing to enquire whether you may have a need for additional staff.

I am currently undertaking a degree in English at Oxford Brookes University and have two years sales experience in a range of retail outlets, including Next and Debenhams. I am currently available for part-time work (up to 15 hours per week) but am planning to take a gap year and would be available for full-time work from June. In the longer term I'm looking to develop my career in the retail sector.

I am attaching a short CV, which expands on my experience, and would welcome an opportunity to find out more about any suitable vacancies. I will telephone you in a few days to hopefully arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Swift