

Tips for Writing Letters of Motivation

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Letter of motivation

A letter of motivation (also called a "statement of purpose" or "personal essay") is a brief essay in which you explain what you hope to achieve during your studies or the scholarship program for which you are applying, as well as what it is that qualifies you as a top candidate for the scholarship.

The letter of motivation is an extremely important part of the application documents because it provides the selection committee with a description of your personality, as well as in what way you plan to contribute to and benefit from the scholarship program for which you are applying.

Useful advice

- Make sure you know the exact format of the letter of motivation required by the competition before you start writing (required number of words/pages, spaces, etc.)
- Make sure your text is clear and readable
- Answer the questions: Why that country, why that university or company, what do you expect to gain by going abroad (mention concrete goals and benefits expected). **Learning the language is not reason enough!**

Here are some tips to keep in mind when writing a letter of motivation.

- A "letter of motivation" is your opportunity to "sell" yourself, i.e. convince the institution or company that they need to have you. Do not be modest: when applying, explain clearly why you think you are suited for the position or why the institution should support you.
- The goal of a letter of motivation is to provide a picture of your background and goals that will persuade the admission committee to accept you.
- Recruiters expect you to show that what you have matches what they want. Remember, this is a question of interpretation, and the secret of writing a good letter of motivation lies in using your qualifications and experience to show that you are the best person to support.
- Beyond the particular skills required by each program, a letter of motivation should show you to be a clear-headed person, capable of thinking clearly, and a motivated, active learner. Write in a clear and logical manner: remember, the way you write and present yourself says a lot about you.
- Before writing the first draft, take some time to think about yourself, your goals and your skills. Think about your background, what and where you have studied, and how all that

makes you suitable for the program/position. Put this in to the first part of the letter of motivation.

- Continue in the second section with your professional goals, explaining the connection between them and your studies. Present your long-term plans, and say how the program you are applying for will help you achieve those goals. Make clear why your background makes you suitable for the program, and how the program will help you achieve your long-term goals. In this section also explain why precisely that university etc. is your choice – the courses, faculty, research interests are possible reasons. In conclusion, state how you can contribute to the program.
- You need to take time. Expect to revise your letter up to 10 times (no exaggeration!) before you come up with a good letter. One strategy is, let it rest after you have written a new draft for a few days, and read it again, in order to get a more objective view. And have it checked by as many other people as possible! To do this, of course, means you must start the process early.
- And don't just copy what you have said in the other documents that you submit, but try to add to them. Answer the essay/statement question, if you have one - it usually will be something like "Why are you the right person for this program?".

Some important terminology:

I would like to apply

I am seriously considering specializing in

I am keenly interested in acquiring more theoretical/practical knowledge in

I would hope to be given the opportunity to

I would hope to be able to take part in

I am familiar with

It is my hope to learn more about and experience other methods of

..... is my first choice as a foreign country because