

What's Next for Maya?

Part 2: Writing a Strong Cover Letter

“Think about your cover letter like a trailer to a film.” — The Open University



Warm up

- When was the last time you wrote a cover letter? How much time did you spend on it?
- Do you think recruiters actually read cover letters? What might make them stop reading after the first few lines?
- Would you use the same cover letter for several similar jobs, or rewrite it for every application?
- Would you use AI to help write a cover letter? How much help is too much?



1. An employer already has your CV. Where would you usually expect to find each type of information? Tick the best option.

	Cover letter	CV	Both	Neither
a. Your previous job titles and dates of employment	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Why you are interested in this particular position	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Your education and qualifications	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. A relevant achievement from your current or previous job	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Why your experience makes you suitable for the position	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. A list of your main responsibilities in previous jobs	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Your key skills	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. A reference letter from your secondary school teacher	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. An explanation of a gap in your employment history	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. What you could bring to the company	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. Your contact details	☐	☐	☐	☐
l. A list of professional references	☐	☐	☐	☐
m. Your salary expectations	☐	☐	☐	☐
n. Your reasons for wanting to change jobs	☐	☐	☐	☐
o. Your preferred working hours and flexibility requirements	☐	☐	☐	☐
p. The salary and benefits you received in your previous job	☐	☐	☐	☐

What is the main difference between the purpose of a CV and a cover letter? *A CV summarises your qualifications, skills and experience, while a cover letter explains why you are a good fit for a specific job.*



2. In Part 1, you helped Maya improve her CV for the Senior Project Coordinator position at *Nexora International*. Look at the final version of her CV. Which three details do you think are most relevant to this position? Why?

Possible answers: Managing six client projects (project coordination); managing budgets of up to £150,000 (financial responsibility); completing a project two weeks early (organisation and time management); working with clients in the UK, France and Germany (international communication); training three new colleagues (leadership and mentoring); organising online training for over 80 employees (planning and coordination skills).

MAYA KHALIL

PROJECT COORDINATOR

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SKILLS

- Project coordination
- Client communication
- Budget management
- Project scheduling
- Time management
- Training and support
- Problem solving
- Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Attention to detail

LANGUAGES

- English – Native
- French – B2
- Spanish – A2

EDUCATION

BA (Hons) Marketing
University of Bristol
2016 – 2020

A-levels
St. Mary's College, London
2014 – 2016

PROFILE

Project Coordinator with over five years' experience coordinating client projects in the digital marketing sector. Experienced in managing multiple projects, budgets and deadlines, with strong client communication and organisational skills. Proven ability to keep projects on track, solve problems and support colleagues effectively in an international environment.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Project Coordinator Mar 2023 – Present
Nova Digital, London

- Manage six client projects simultaneously, from initial meetings through to final delivery.
- Manage project schedules and budgets of up to £150,000.
- Prepare monthly client reports covering budgets, deadlines and project issues.
- Work directly with clients in the UK, France and Germany.
- Trained three new colleagues to use the company's project management system.
- Reorganised the schedule for a major client project, helping the team deliver it two weeks ahead of schedule.
- Organised an online training programme for a client involving more than 80 employees.

Junior Project Coordinator Jul 2021 – Feb 2023
Nova Digital, London

- Supported project managers with the delivery of client projects.
- Helped organise project timelines and meetings.
- Communicated with clients and suppliers.
- Prepared project documents and presentations.
- Assisted with project reporting.

Marketing Assistant Sep 2020 – Jun 2021
Nova Digital, London

- Supported the marketing team with campaign delivery.
- Helped organise events and promotional activities.
- Created content for social media.
- Assisted with market research.
- Maintained the company's contact database.



3. Read Maya's cover letter and complete the tasks on the next page with a partner.

MAYA KHALIL

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24 September 2026

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the position of Senior Project Coordinator at Nexora International. I have over five years of experience in project coordination and feel that I am now ready for a new challenge and more responsibility.

In my current role as Project Coordinator, I manage six client projects and am responsible for schedules, budgets and client communication. I regularly work with clients in the UK, France and Germany and enjoy working in an international environment. I am organised, reliable and a strong communicator, and I am good at staying calm when problems arise.

I am particularly interested in this position because it would give me the opportunity to work on larger international projects and develop my career. Nexora seems like an exciting company to work for, and I believe my experience and skills would make me a good fit for your team.

Although I have not yet held a formal management position, I have trained three new colleagues in my current role. I have also organised an online training programme for a client involving more than 80 employees. I believe these experiences have helped me develop skills that would be useful when supporting and supervising others.

Thank you for considering my application. I would be happy to provide any further information and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Maya Khalil

a. First impressions: Choose three words that best describe Maya's cover letter. Compare your choices with your partner.

professional · confident · convincing · generic · personal · repetitive · clear · memorable · cautious · enthusiastic · casual · ambitious · emotional · desperate

b. Find an example of each in Maya's letter. Compare your answers.

Possible answers:

1. A specific detail that strengthens her application
Managing six client projects, working with clients in the UK, France and Germany, training three new colleagues, organising an online training programme for over 80 employees.
2. Something that shows why Maya wants the job
Working on larger international projects, developing her career, taking on a new challenge and more responsibility.
3. A statement that sounds quite generic
"Nexora seems like an exciting company to work for", "I am organised, reliable and a strong communicator", "I believe my experience and skills would make me a good fit for your team."
4. A claim that could be supported with stronger evidence
"I am organised, reliable and a strong communicator", "I am good at staying calm when problems arise", "I believe my experience and skills would make me a good fit for your team."

c. Find two strengths or achievements from her CV that she has not mentioned in her cover letter.

- *Managing project budgets of up to £150,000*
- *reorganising a project schedule to finish two weeks early.*

Which one would strengthen her cover letter most? Where would you include it?

d. Imagine Maya is applying for a project manager position at a small local construction company instead of Nexora International. How much of her cover letter could she keep without making changes? Explain your reasoning.

☐ Almost all of it ☐ About half of it ☐ Very little of it

e. What information about Nexora International or the Senior Project Coordinator position could Maya include to make her letter more convincing? *Specific projects Nexora is working on, the company's goals and values, its international clients or markets, key responsibilities of the position, skills and experience mentioned in the job advertisement, how Maya's achievements could benefit the company.*



4. Maya sends her cover letter to a friend, who tells her she can do better. She decides to start again and makes a list of what she wants to include. What order would you put the points in? Compare your order with a partner's.

3 Give specific evidence of relevant experience and achievements

4 Explain what Maya could bring to the company

5 Express enthusiasm about the opportunity and suggest a next step

1 Say which position she is applying for and briefly introduce herself

2 Explain why *Nexora International* and the position interest her



This is a suggested order, not the only correct answer. Accept other logical sequences if students can explain their choices. Some points may also be combined in the same paragraph.

Making Confident but Realistic Claims

When writing a cover letter, it's important to sound confident without exaggerating your abilities. Phrases such as *I think*, *I believe* and *I feel* can help you avoid making claims that are too strong.

Useful structures:

- I believe (that) + clause
I believe my experience would be valuable in this role.
- could / would + base verb
I could bring strong organisational skills to the team.
- may / might + base verb
My language skills may be useful when working with international clients.
- I would describe myself as + adjective
I would describe myself as organised and reliable.

⚠ Watch out!

Using too many of these phrases can make you sound unsure.

X *I think I might perhaps be able to lead a team.*

✓ *I believe I could take on more leadership responsibility.*



5. Rewrite the statements using hedging language to make them sound more measured and professional. Try to use a range of structures from the box above.

a. I am the perfect candidate for this position.

I believe I would be a good candidate for this position.

b. My organisational skills will guarantee that every project runs smoothly.

I believe my organisational skills could help ensure that every project runs smoothly.

c. I am an outstanding leader who can manage any team.

I would describe myself as a capable leader who could manage different teams.

d. My international experience makes me better than other applicants.

I believe my international experience could make me a strong candidate for this position.

e. I will make a huge difference to your company.

I feel I could make a positive difference to your company.

Supporting Your Claims

In a cover letter, support your claims with specific evidence. Instead of simply saying you have a skill, show how you have used it or what you have achieved.

- claim + through/by + verb-ing
I have developed strong communication skills through working with international clients.
- claim + for example + evidence
I have strong organisational skills. For example, I currently manage six client projects.
- In my current/previous role + evidence
In my current role, I manage project schedules, budgets and deadlines.
- This experience has helped me + base verb
This experience has helped me develop my leadership skills.

⚠ Avoid unsupported lists of qualities.

✗ *I am organised, reliable and a strong communicator.*

✓ *I have developed strong organisational and communication skills through managing projects for clients in three countries.*



6. Match each claim with the best evidence. Then choose three pairs and combine them into natural sentences for a cover letter.

Claims

- a. I have strong organisational skills.
- b. I have developed leadership skills.
- c. I communicate effectively with international clients.
- d. I am good at managing deadlines.
- e. I can coordinate large-scale activities.

Evidence

- 1. I trained three new colleagues in my current role.
- 2. I reorganised a major project schedule, helping the team deliver the project two weeks early.
- 3. I currently manage six client projects from the first meeting to final delivery.
- 4. I work directly with clients in the UK, France, and Germany.
- 5. I organised an online training programme for more than 80 employees.

Matches: a **3** b **1** c **4** d **2** e **5**



7. Choose three qualities from the list below, or add your own. Think of a specific example from your own experience that demonstrates each quality. Then write a sentence for each, using evidence to support your claim.

organised · reliable · adaptable · creative · proactive · resourceful · a strong communicator · a good team player · good at solving problems · good at working under pressure

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8. Go back to Maya's original cover letter on page 3. Choose ONE paragraph that you think needs the most improvement and rewrite it.

Make sure your paragraph:

- is specific to the job
- uses evidence from Maya's CV
- uses appropriate language to make convincing claims

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