

Cover Letters and Tools for Creating Portfolios

by Warwick New

What a good cover letter should look like. And the points you need to get across.



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Over the past few days, I've seen some absolute horror shows of cover letters for game art positions, and heard about UNBELIEVABLE cover letter mistakes from a recruiter I know at a big studio...

So let's talk cover letters for games.

1/x

11:44 PM · Jul 9, 2021 · Twitter Web App

In the twitter post captured above which you can find [here](#). You can clearly see that cover letters are a thing that many people applying for the games industry get wrong.

Following the twitter thread you will be able to see what the most important things you will need to primarily target, to communicate to the recruiter. And even view his previous cover letter for reference.

Things you will need to communicate in order

1. Your contact information.
2. The position you are interested in.
3. Your level of experience.
4. An extremely brief summary of past responsibilities which you can flesh out in your CV.
5. Why you want the job. This section is a chance to express yourself and why you want to work for this studio or company specifically.

If your cover letter doesn't communicate these points effectively re-write it until it does.

Points to remember about the language used in a cover letter

1. This is your first impression on a potential recruiter, make sure your wording shows a relatively casual but straight to the point human being behind the cover letter.
2. Your cover letter should take up roughly half an A4 page to a Full page. 600 words is the Usual target. With three to four paragraphs.
3. No negative wording. you shouldn't have the word count available to be inserting words that make your sentences sound negative in the first place.
4. Make sure your Cover letter reads like a letter. As this is it's original purpose. Including a Greeting and a signature is common and good practice.
5. Finally to finalize your first impression it is customary to thank the recruiter for reading to the end of the cover letter and considering furthering your application. Some people also include a call to action here, such as telling the recruiter to feel free to contact them over their contact details.

Finally here is an example of a good Cover Letter used by someone who got a job in the games industry:

Hello!

I am very interested in applying for the Senior Character Artist position listed on the Arkane Austin careers page. I'm a 3D character artist with a decade of game industry experience, and I'm looking for new challenges for myself.

My previous experience includes everything from low-poly hand painted characters for mobile games, all the way to cinematic AAA character work on games such as Marvel's Spider-Man and Ratchet and Clank: Rift Apart. Much of that experience has been in the technical areas of character art, including developing standardized character topology, high-quality shaders in multiple node-based tools, and iterating on technical and art direction notes for multiple teams. The one constant in my career has been my passion for creating the best looking characters in games, from concept to shipped product.

I've always found Arkane's games to be some of the most compelling I've ever played, be it artistically or just from a gameplay standpoint, so I simply can't pass up the chance at contributing to them. The Dishonored games especially are a series I find myself coming back to time and again as examples of the types of games I want to make, with art I can fall in love with.

The application form includes links to my LinkedIn and portfolio website, but I'm including them here for your convenience.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/xavierck/>

Portfolio: <https://www.xavierck.com/>

Thank you so much for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Xavier Coelho-Kostolny
3D Character Artist
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Task

Write a mock cover letter for one of the job descriptions from your Gap Analysis.

Then critique a partners cover letter and continue to work on your portfolios and CVs.

[PDF Version](#)

Portfolio Website Building Tools

Build Your own site from scratch

- Hugo static site builder.
 - Great way to build static sites that look like dynamic sites.
 - Easy to add new content in the Markdown syntax.
 - Requires some front end web dev knowledge to use effectively to set up custom sites. But once set up is easy to expand.
- HTML, CSS & JS
 - Can look as good as any other site with enough work
 - Requires some front end web dev knowledge to use effectively.
 - Not super expandable.
- Some JS Framework like React.
 - Can take a long time to load on slow servers.
 - Unless it's talking to a database or dynamic source of data there isn't too much point in using it.

Easy WYSIWYG Site builders

- Wordpress
 - Most common site builder and CMS out there.
 - Many many great templates available.
 - Prone to hacking if not kept up to date and served on a private server.
- Wix
 - Extremely easy to use.
 - Easier to do modern UI stuff like cards.
 - Used by a lot of graduate students.
- Square Space
 - Recommended by that one youtuber once.