The salutation is a very essential part of a cover letter. It is among the first things that the reader of the cover letter notices. It is therefore crucial to come up with a salutation that is accurate, interesting and appropriate. There are several pointers to follow in composing cover letters which adhere to the widely accepted standards. It is important to address the letter to the person who will be personally handling the application. If there were any amount of uncertainty pertaining to the name, title or position of the person, it would be wise to first make inquiries to the company.

As a basic rule, one should always start the salutation with Dear, followed by the person’s title, first name, last name and a colon. If unaware of a person’s name, use Mr. or Sir to address a male and use Ms. or Madam to address a female. If unsure of a woman’s marital status, be sure to use Ms.

A badly written salutation can severely ruin your chances of being hired. It is therefore important for job seekers to have basic knowledge of the rules to apply in making a successful salutation in a cover letter.