



Language Support for Migrants *A Council of Europe Toolkit*

Tool 74 – Scenario: writing a job application letter

Aims: To introduce language relevant to job application letters and to provide support with writing an application letter.

Introduction

For many migrants who have leave to remain in the host country, finding work is urgent. This is one of three tools in a series designed to help migrants who already have an elementary level in the host country language (at least A1) with job applications. This is the second tool in the series, which consists of: “*Preparing a curriculum vitae or CV*” (73), “*Writing a job application letter*” (74) and “*Preparing for a job interview*” (75). It is suggested that these three tools should be used in the above order. Be prepared for the need to spread the activities suggested in each of these tools over more than one language support session.

Writing a CV, applying for jobs and attending interviews are difficult for migrants with elementary skills in the relevant language. When working with these tools, the activities should be introduced gradually and where possible work should be individualised. For example, migrants will all need help to learn certain vocabulary and expressions, but each learner needs only to work on the specific vocabulary and expressions necessary to describe his or her work experience, apply for the jobs he or she is interested in and prepare for the kind(s) interview he or she will be attending.

Communicative situations

- Talking about skills and attitudes
- Writing a job application letter

Materials

- A) Pictures of positive characteristics/ attitudes of an employee
- B) Matching table
- C) Template of a job application letter

Language activities

Activity 1

First ask learners to think about important general life skills and to suggest some that are needed in the workplace. Then use material A) and ask learners to orally describe the pictures. Ask them to match the 7 pictures with these characteristics / attitudes:

1. Active
2. Friendly
3. Multi-tasking
4. Positive
5. Punctual

6. Target oriented
7. Team worker

Activity 2

Use material B) and ask migrants to match the characteristics / attitudes in the left column with the related definition on the right, as shown in the given example.

When definitions are missing, invite them to suggest them.

Activity 3

Invite participants to answer about questions like the following

- *Am I generally punctual?*
- *Am I well organised in my daily activities?*
- *Am I flexible? Am I able to adapt to changes?*
- *Have I worked in a team before? How well did it go?*
- *Do I enjoy collaborating with other people? Why?*

(Refer also to Tool 38 Supporting migrants who need to describe their general skills when applying for a job).

Activity 4

Ask migrants to work in pairs: each learner uses words arising in the previous activities to describe his/her work-related skills and attitudes to a classmate (who is invited to take notes).

When this activity is completed, participants can finally finish their curriculum vitae. Ask them to look at the left column of the CV template (see Tool 73, Scenario - preparing a curriculum vitae) and complete the pending section on 'personal skills and attitudes'.

Activity 5

Now introduce the topic of job application letters. First, check whether migrants know what an application letter is. Then, ask them if they have ever written a job application letter.

Then invite learners to read the template and the example of an application letter (material C). Let them ask about words and expressions they don't understand. Give special attention to the structure of the letter and the underlined formulations.

Finally, ask them what the goal of an application letter is in their opinion (this will help to prepare the ground for the last tool of the series, Tool 75, Scenario – preparing for a job interview).

Activity 6

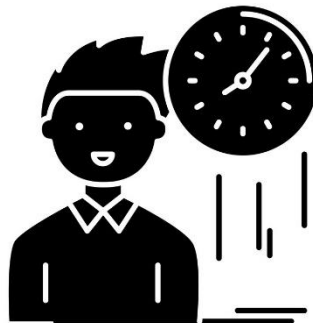
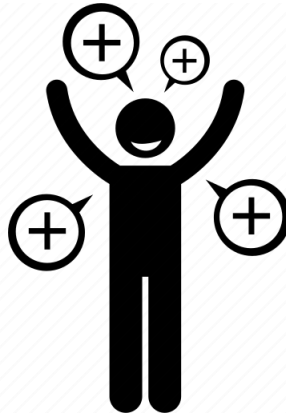
Ask participants to use their smartphones and to search online for job advertisements on a job opportunity platform suggested by you. Put the learners in the same pairs as in Activity 4: each learner is asked to find an interesting position for his/her classmate, according to their previous work experience (an outcome of Tool 73), and bearing in mind the characteristics they listed in Activity 4.

Activity 7

On the basis of the selected job advertisement, get learners to practise writing a job application letter. Ask them to follow the given template, to use the formulations discussed in Activity 5 and to fill in the gaps indicated by (XXXX).

Materials

A)



B)

Characteristics/attitudes	Definitions
Committed	Able to do many things at the same time
Motivated	A person who is not in delay
Multitasking	Responsible person
Punctual	Open and collaborative
Target oriented	Able to work with others within a group
Consistent	
Organized	Reliable person, you can count on him/her
Easy going	Flexible, able to adapt to different situations
Friendly	Active person
Team worker	
Hard worker	
Dynamic	Determined, able to focus on goals

C)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing this letter because I would like to apply for the position of (XXXX) that you are advertising.

I would describe myself as (XXXX) and (XXXX).

Attached please find a curriculum vitae describing my previous work experience. I would like to give more details about my skills and attitudes during a job interview.

I believe that I am the right person for this position because (XXXX).

You can contact me via this e-mail address (XXXX) or by phone (XXXX).

Thanks for your considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Name and Surname