

Are Cover Letters Dead in 2026? New Survey Reveals That Most Recruiters Ignore Them

Novorésumé's recent research shows that cover letters are losing their power to influence hiring choices.

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, December 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Writing a cover

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The importance of a cover letter persists in higher-level hiring decisions, and a...strategic cover letter is still worth the time investment for job seekers determined to make it to the finish line.”

Andrei Kurtuy

letter is perhaps the most despised step in the standard job application process, and many current job seekers are dubious about the purpose of a cover letter for their dream role. [Novorésumé](#), a career support platform known by its 16 million users for the free creative resume templates and cover letter help it provides, recently [surveyed over 200 recruiters](#) and HR professionals across the United States to find answers for 2026. Their findings indicate that even effective cover letters are increasingly being ignored and are no longer as impactful as they once were, but may still play a role in the later stages of recruitment.

Here are the key takeaways:

-2 in 5 HR Professionals (39.1%) Are Not Reading Cover Letters as 2026 Approaches. Prioritizing the more measurable value of a resume over that of a generic cover letter is not a new practice for recruiters and HR leaders. Novorésumé broke down their findings by HR role and found that more than half of recruiters (51.7%) will never read an applicant's cover letter, putting more pressure on applicants to submit strong and company-tailored resumes in order to pass the first phase. This percentage drops for heads of HR (29.4%) and HR managers (22.9%) involved in the final hiring decisions, but without a strong resume, applicants are unlikely to reach them.

-When Cover Letters Aren't Ignored, They're Twice as Likely to be Read AFTER Resumes. 60.9% of HR professionals will still review an applicant's cover letter, but just 21.3% will read through it for a first impression. For the remaining 39.6%, cover letters are seen as supplemental to a resume and will be reviewed only afterwards. As of this June, job applications submitted via LinkedIn were [up 45% from 2024](#). With this rapid increase of competition, job seekers in 2026 will have a heightened responsibility to prove their job relevancy and humanity in both their resume AND cover letter.

-Just 1 in 4 HR Professionals (25.7%) Believe That Cover Letters Can Tip the Scale. Today's recruiters and HR leaders are not simply "too busy" to read cover letters when compared with past generations; they are wholly doubtful of the value they can add in an age when cover letters are so easily fabricated with AI. While a quarter have seen a cover letter play a tangible role in hiring decisions, 44.6% state simply that they're "nice to have" and 29.7% maintain that they're "not helpful". With this in mind, instead of crafting a generic cover letter, next year's job seekers would do well to focus their cover letter on company-tailored information and value statements that bridge the job listing and their resume.

"This new data proves that a relevant, professional resume will be more important than ever in capturing a recruiter's attention in 2026, and a cover letter can not compensate if that element is missing," stated Andrei Kurtuy, co-founder of Novorésumé. "However, the importance of a cover letter persists in higher-level hiring decisions, and a personalized, strategic cover letter is still worth the time investment for job seekers determined to make it to the finish line."

Novorésumé offers its users a vast collection of data-driven resume and cover letter templates to aid in the 2026 job search. Please visit their official website to get started for free.

Resume Templates:

<https://novoresume.com/resume-templates>

Cover Letter Templates:

<https://novoresume.com/cover-letter-templates>

About Novorésumé:

Novorésumé is a resume building platform designed to help job seekers around the world find career success. With its research-backed resume templates, personalized feedback features, and innovative AI-supported tech, Novorésumé is actively helping over 16 million users land roles at top-tier companies like Apple, Tesla, Google. Novorésumé is a trusted source for job industry updates and expert advice, and also offers a "Career Blog" to support website users in their job search.

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