

## **Addressing your application letter properly**

Many people seem to have a problem in figuring out how to address someone they are writing to, say, in the cover letter accompanying a PhD or postdoc application. The fact that such documents are often submitted electronically and that (sometimes personal) information about the addressee is available on the internet can lead to a false sense of closeness. Add to this the inexplicable urge of some people to refer to females, no matter how high their rank, by first name and dropping any academic titles, and you realize that you could go badly wrong! Fortunately, an easy solution is at hand. Simply begin your letter or email with “Dear Prof. Loll, ...” or “Dear Dr. Loll, ...”. Also, note that as a general rule I do not even read letters that address me by “Dear Sir, ...”.