



THANK YOU LETTERS

Thank you letters are a critical part of the job search process. Send thank you notes to people who help you along the way, including networking contacts, informational interviewers, and job interviewers. This is a professional gesture that will establish good will and distinguish you from other candidates.

A follow up thank you letter is your chance to present yourself again and to answer or address specific concerns raised during the interview about whether you have qualifications the organization is seeking. For example, if an interviewer had doubts about your supervisory experience, you can emphasize that you have demonstrated leadership abilities in much of your volunteer work. You may also use your letter to mention a specific area of expertise that you did not have an opportunity to discuss in the interview. Send thank you letters within 24 to 48 hours after each interview.

WHY WRITE A THANK YOU LETTER?

- **To acknowledge the interviewer's time** in considering you for the position or in spending time with you to provide information about an industry or company.
- **To highlight something** from the conversation that you learned and/or were impressed by: Use one or two specific examples.
- **To express your enthusiasm** for the position if you sincerely feel this way. If an organization is your first choice, let the addressee know. If you are not interested in the position, thank the person for his/her time and let him/her know diplomatically that you are not interested in further consideration.
- **To supply information** you promised in the interview. For example, you may have mentioned an article or paper you wrote that they wanted to see.
- **To clarify/elaborate** on a question to which you feel you responded poorly. Do not remind the interviewer that something did not go well in the interview. Instead, state the thought in a strong, positive tone.
- **To reinforce your assets**, especially if it is clear that the interviewer has reservations about your candidacy. You may feel that your GPA was of concern, or that the employer was troubled by your lack of direct experience. Acknowledge the interviewer's hesitation and provide a strong, positive counterargument.
- **To show you have good manners.** Employers want to hire people with polish and professionalism. Thank you notes contribute to establishing a professional reputation.

Thank you letters should be brief. If you were interviewed by more than one person, it is best to personalize each note, perhaps by referring to a comment each interviewer made. In some cases, you may write the same letter to each interviewer and "cc" each person on every letter. Use your best judgment, as each case is different.

It is usually best to type your letter/envelope and send by postal mail. It may be acceptable to hand-write a card to a personal networking contact. If the organization has special note cards (UNICEF, for example), you might consider using that organization's stationery. If sending a thank you letter to someone in a U.S. government agency where surface mail would not arrive in a timely fashion, e-mail is acceptable. In some cases, you may want to send your letter by both postal and e-mail to ensure delivery. If in doubt, you may speak to a member of the CDC staff.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THANK YOU LETTERS

Your name (Use same format and font as your resume)

Your address

Your e-mail address

Your phone number

Name of addressee

Title

Organization name

Address

Dear Dr., Mr., Ms. (etc.) _____:

OPENING PARAGRAPH

As you begin, express your sincere appreciation. You may want to write something like “I want to thank you very much for taking the time to interview me yesterday for the _____ position. I enjoyed meeting you and learning about the organization.”

You can also mention something that particularly impressed you about the interviewer or the organization, and/or about a particular aspect of the discussion you had with the interviewer. For example: “I was impressed by your commitment to the firm, and the varied challenges you have encountered during your time there.” Mention something specific you learned from the interview.

MIDDLE SECTION (one or two short paragraphs)

You may include one or more of the following:

- Reemphasize your strongest qualifications
- Bring attention to the good match between your qualifications and the job requirements
- Reiterate your interest in the position
- Provide or offer supplemental information not previously given

Example:

“My enthusiasm for the position and my interest in working for _____ were strengthened as a result of the interview. I believe that my communication and analytic skills would enable me to be successful in this position and to make a significant contribution to the firm. I would enjoy working with you and your staff in your team-oriented, results-driven environment. You provide the kind of opportunity I seek.”

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

Restate your appreciation and interest. For example: “Again, thank you for the interview and your consideration. I hope we will have the opportunity to work together.”

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name typed