Thank You Letters

UMW Career Services

WHO DO I SEND A THANK YOU LETTER TO?

Send Thank You letters to anyone who has:

- referred you to employers
- interviewed you for employment
- offered you a position
- rejected you for employment
- provided you with general information
- written recommendations for you

WHEN DO I SEND A THANK YOU LETTER?

Try to send the letters **within 24 hours** of the interviews, a maximum of two days later.

GENERAL THANK YOU LETTER GUIDELINES

Length of your letter

- **Keep it to a brief page**. Don't stress over it too much - it's more important just to send something quickly than to delay doing it for days.

Personalize each letter

- When interviewing with several people at one organization, take a few seconds between interviews to jot down some notes about each conversation. Use these notes when writing individualized thank you letters to each interviewer.
- When sending letters to several people at an organization, each letter does not need to be completely different from the rest. But don't send identical letters to several people - your letters will generally all end up in your file in the Human Resources department.

Content of your letter

- Thank the interviewer for his or her time, and reiterate your interest in the job and your enthusiasm for the company.
- Whenever possible, say something that will help your interviewer remember you as an individual from amongst all the candidates:
    1. address a topic of particular interest (to your interviewer or to you) that arose during the conversation, especially where that topic reflects favorably on your job-related skills (for example, you talked for 15 minutes about the mountaineering trip you led last summer or your research on the health care industry).
    2. address an interviewer's specific concern in greater detail than was possible during the actual interview (for example, the interviewer seemed concerned that you did not have the quantitative skills necessary for the job)
    3. re-emphasize a skill or strength important to that interviewer (for example, the interviewer showed a particular interest in your sports and team-related activities). You can also insert a little humor into the process.

Other tips

- **Ask for your interviewers' business cards**, or write down the interviewers' titles and the proper spelling of their names before leaving the interview site.
- **Carefully proof read each letter** and have one other person do so, too.

E-MAIL VS. POSTAL MAIL

The following is a summary of employer responses to this question, as posed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Three out of the four employers responding said that an e-mail thank-you note is acceptable. One said that thank-you notes should be sent by mail. Here's what each said:

- One employer said that e-mail from students is **very welcome**. Students should use the same formal wording in their e-mail that they use when sending correspondence through the U.S. Postal Service, the employer said, although e-mail shouldn't sound like a form letter. Students should include a few comments or highlights from the interview, and then close by stating an interest in the position and company. Many students do not use thank-you notes anymore, the employer added. And the lack of courtesy is disappointing. The employer noted that the lack of a thank-you note can factor in the hiring decision. If a job candidate cannot find the time to write a brief note, the employer says, how can he or she apply attention to detail and/or protocol on the job?

- A second employer said that thank-you notes **should not** be sent via e-mail. The employer backs up this opinion by quoting from etiquette professionals who say all thank-you notes should be sent via U.S. mail. The reason? A letter is more personal.

- A third employer said that it is **appropriate to respond with e-mail**. Hiring is moving at a quicker pace, so e-mail seems to be more effective at times. The form of the e-mail is not critical; however, the subject line should say 'Interview Follow-up' or 'Thank you for the Interview.' Sincere notes are preferred. This employer looks for the candidate who asks for the job!

- The final employer said that when sending e-mail resumes and cover letters, applicants should follow the same guidelines as for paper correspondence. Applicants should send formal correspondence using the appropriate salutation (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Dr.) and ending with a signature line that includes a mailing address, e-mail address, web address, and fax and telephone numbers.

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

3884 Glebe Road
Arlington, VA 23592
July 22, 2005

Ms. Pamela Marks, Principal
Manassas South High School
4300 W. Sudley Road
Manassas, VA 24192

Dear Ms. Marks:

Thank you for meeting with me to discuss the position of Spanish teacher. Once again I would like to convey my interest and enthusiasm in the possibility of teaching Spanish at Manassas South High School.

Having had the opportunity to study the cultures of Mexico in Guadalajara, Mexico this past year, I was able to enhance my language skills and build upon the strong foundation I acquired from Mary Washington College. I have a good deal of knowledge about Spanish-speaking people to contribute in the classroom as well as my ability to speak the language fluently.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding the status of my application. If further information is needed, I will be happy to provide it.

Sincerely,

Jane Quin