Why do you send Follow-up Letters?

Follow-up letters are critical in today's busy world. Follow-up letters show that you are professional and interested in the organization, position, etc. It also keeps consistent contact with your networking contacts, which puts you in a better position to be considered for career opportunities.

Types of Follow-up Letters

- Thank You Letter
- Acceptance Letter
- Declining Offer Letter
- Response to a Rejection Letter
- Withdrawal of Application Letter

Send the appropriate follow-up letters to anyone who has:

- Referred you to employers or other contacts
- Interviewed you for employment
- Offered you a position
- Rejected you for employment
- Provided you with general information
- Written recommendations for you

Timing

Send the letters **within 24 hours** of the interview, conversation, receipt of letter, etc; but no more than two days later.

Length of your letter

Keep it to a brief page. Don't stress a lot of details - it's more important to send something quickly rather 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 write 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 the Thank You Letter

- Thank the person for his or her time, and state your interest (or non-interest) in the job and your enthusiasm for the organization.
- **Whenever possible, say something that will help your interviewer remember you as an individual from amongst all the candidates**:

    1. Addressing a topic of particular interest (to the 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); **OR**:
    2. Addressing 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); **OR**:
    3. Re-emphasizing a skill or strength important to that interviewer (for example, the interviewer showed a particular interest in your research and publications activities).

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.
- **Print each letter on a high quality linen or bond paper** (available at most copy centers), in white, off-white, cream or *light* gray, and mail them in matching envelopes.

E-mail vs. U.S. mail – Thank You Letters

In a recent survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, employers were asked if thank you letters could be sent by e-mail. Three out of the four employers responding said that an e-mail thank-you note is acceptable.

Thank You Letter

454 N. Baltimore St
Baltimore, MD 21205

April 2, 2000

Jessica Agency
Recruiting Specialist
ABC International
Any Address
Anywhere, Any state, Any zip

Dear Ms. Agency:

Thank you for taking the time to interview me for the position of Senior Clinical Project Manager with your organization. Your discussion of upcoming public health trends at ABC International, as well as your expectations of clinical managers, was very informative and interesting. I am confident that I would make a strong contribution to your staff by increasing the efficiency in the labs and expanding your research program.

As discussed in our interview, my qualifications that would directly relate to your company include:

- Over four years of broad based experience in the medical field.
- My ability to effectively handle many different projects simultaneously.
- My experience working with Medical Doctors.

Again, thank you for taking the time to consider my candidacy. If there are further questions, please feel free to contact me at (410) 955-1111 or via email at astudent@jhsph.edu. As we discussed, I look forward to hearing from you the week of May 6, 2002 with your final decision.

Sincerely,

Any Student

Any Student

Other Follow-up Letters

Other Follow-up letters should be sent via mail to present a professional image. Sending a 'declining offer letter' via email may be construed by some individuals as being evasive.

ACCEPTANCE LETTER

5555 S. Bmore Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21205
(410) 555-5555

December 20, 2001

Joe Jones
Executive Director
XYZ Government Agency
555 Executive Lane
Washington, D.C. 20211

Dear Mr. Jones:

It is with great pleasure that I accept your offer of employment as a Senior Epidemiologist at XYZ at the salary of $63,000 and a start date of June 1, 2002. I am confident that I will make a strong contribution to your staff by performing expert analyses.

I appreciate your help and all the information that you have given me. It will make my upcoming transition to your company successful. Throughout the interview process I found the individuals at XYZ to be very knowledgeable and I look forward to working with you and other XYZ employees.

Thank you again for your assistance during the interview process.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Jane Doe

DECLINING OFFER LETTER

5555 S. Bmore Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21205
(410) 555-5555

December 20, 2001

Joe Jones
Executive Director
XYZ Government Agency
555 Executive Lane
Washington, D.C. 20211

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for extending an offer to me for the position Research Scientist with your organization. After much consideration, I am declining your offer to accept a position that I feel is a better fit for my career goals.

I appreciate your help and all the information that you have given me. Throughout the interview process my excitement about XYZ grew and I found the individuals at XYZ to be very knowledgeable and happy to be employed at XYZ. Again I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Jane Doe

RESPONSE TO A REJECTION LETTER

5555 S. Bmore Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21205
(410) 555-5555

December 20, 2001

Joe Jones
Executive Director
XYZ Government Agency
555 Executive Lane
Washington, D.C. 20211

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to interview for the Health Care Analyst position. I appreciate your assistance during the interview process and all the information that you have given me. Throughout the interview process my excitement about XYZ grew and I found the individuals at XYZ to be very knowledgeable and happy to be employed at XYZ.

Although I was not the candidate you chose for this position, I am still excited about XYZ if possible would like to be considered for future opportunities. Again I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Jane Doe

WITHDRAWAL OF APPLICATION

5555 S. Bmore Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21205
(410) 555-5555

December 20, 2001

Joe Jones
Executive Director
XYZ Government Agency
555 Executive Lane
Washington, D.C. 20211

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to interview for the Health Educator position. At this time I do not desire to pursue the potential of future employment at your company. Again I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Jane Doe