BEST PRACTICES:
PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES & THANK YOU NOTES

Professional References

- Create a reference sheet using the same heading as your resume and cover letter. This list should contain supervisors or managers who can offer positive feedback about you.Think about who from your past is likely to provide an enthusiastic reference. Just because someone was your boss, does not mean you need to list them if you don't think they would provide you with an enthusiastic endorsement.

- Ideally, you will list at least three names. References may be divided into categories if needed: Professional, Academic, and Personal. If you have at least three professional or academic references, you do not need to list personal ones.

- Be aware that depending on the employer they work for, some references will only give out basic information such as confirming the dates you were employed there.

- Bring your list of references with you to your interview. Do not offer references until the hiring manager requests them. It is best to avoid handing them out until you have a good chance of getting a position. Do not include your list of references with your initial application materials.

- Make sure you ask them before you put them on the list and then contact your references as soon as you have been told by the hiring manager that they plan to reach out to them. To ensure that your references offer helpful and specific feedback, provide them with your most recent resume, cover letter and the job description for which they may be contacted about. Offer to have a short conversation with them so that you can bring them up to speed about your recent accomplishments, career goals and possibly give them some suggestions about what to highlight about your work experience if they are contacted, but only if your reference is open to this influence.

- If one of your references is no longer in the position they held when you worked with them, list their current title and employer with a note about where and when you worked with them.

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PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Joe Shmo, Owner
Relationship: Supervisor @ Shmo Tires
Shmo Tires Inc
Portland, OR

LinkedIn.com/joeschmo
Tel: 503-555-1234
JoeS@ShmoTires.com

Olive Oil, Office Manager
Relationship: Supervisor with Key Bank
Finance Bank
Portland OR

LinkedIn.com/oliveoil
Tel: 971-555-8888
OliveO@FinanceCo.com

ACADEMIC REFERENCES

Dr. Richard Quant, Ass't Professor of Finance
Relationship: Professor for Finance 301
Portland State University
Portland, OR

LinkedIn.com/richardquant
Tel: 503-725-5555
RQuant@pdx.edu

Thank You Notes

Send a thank you note/email after a job interview or informational interview. Thank you notes offer you another opportunity to express your interest and enthusiasm in the position.

- Thank you notes can be either handwritten on professional stationary or typed on the same paper you used for your resume/cover letter. They can also be sent by email, though an actual physical letter will stand out more because it is relatively uncommon these days.

- Send a thank you to all the individuals you met with during your interview. Be sure to get their business cards for the correct spelling of their names and their titles. If you didn't manage to get a card, check to see if they have a profile on LinkedIn.

- If the employer will be making a decision in a week or less, you may want to hand deliver your note or send an email. Remember, when emailing to write as you would a formal letter: Do use capitalization, correct grammar and full sentences. Don't use the sorts of abbreviations you would when texting a friend. You can also save your well formatted professional looking letter as a pdf, take a snapshot of the page and paste it right into the body of an email.

A top-notch thank you letter must include the following components:

- An opening statement in which you express your appreciation for the opportunity to interview.

- A second paragraph that reinforces your understanding of the position's requirements and emphasizes your qualifications. Be sure to include any important information you may have omitted at the interview.

- If necessary, a third paragraph to correct any misunderstanding the interviewer might have following your meeting. You can also use this paragraph to counter any issues the interviewer raised about your qualifications or relevant experience.

- A closing sentence that expresses your interest in the position and the employer and encourages continued contact.

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June 23, 201X
Ms. Emma East
Media Buyer, East Advertising
10000 SW 3rd Ave.
Middletown, OR 97777

Dear Ms. East:
Thank you for taking the time to meet with me yesterday to discuss the Media Assistant Internship. I am very excited about the opportunity to be in an agency environment working directly with media reps.

I was really impressed with East's commitment to keeping the customer involved during all aspects of promotional development. I believe that my skills in customer relations will be an asset in this position.

As we discussed, I am available to begin work immediately and am comfortable with flexible hours. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jill Jobseeker