

Follow-up/Thank You Letters

- Take notes on high and low points: Look for opportunities for improvement.
- Immediately after your interview, think about the good and bad moments of the interview.
- Make a note of what subjects you discussed at the interview so you may refer to them in your thank you letter.
- Note three things that went well during the interview.
- List the questions that you had difficulty answering during the interview. Think about how you may improve upon your answer for your next interview and jot them down for future reference.
- Write down opportunities for improvement for the next interview.

Send a Thank You Note

The thank you note is a very important step in the interview (whether for an actual position or for information only) process. Although you may hear some employers say sending a thank-you note is a waste of time, generally, employers like them. Even if the interview (or the interviewer) wasn't your favorite, and/or you are not interested in the position, it is important to say thank you for the time the interviewer spent with you. Also, if all of the other candidates send a thank you note and you fail to do so, then the thank you note could make the difference between receiving an offer or not. And a well-written note may enhance your candidacy if you follow these few guidelines:

- **Send your thank-you note as soon as possible after the contact:** If your note arrives after the hiring decision has been made, it will have little impact. Try to send the letters within 24 hours of the interviews, a maximum of two days later.
- **Email vs. Traditional Mail:** Employers have different preferences in terms of how they like to receive thank you notes. Some individuals prefer to receive handwritten notes, others typed formal letters or by e-mail. But all generally agree: It is better to receive thank you notes in any form, then not at all.
 - **Email Thank You Notes:** In these days of electronic communication, is it appropriate to send thank you letters by email? In most cases, yes. If you have corresponded with people from the organization via email for setting up the interview and answering questions, then send an email thank-you note after the interview. Sending a thank you letter by email also allows you to reinforce your interest for the job immediately, which is particularly important if the employer is making a quick hiring decision. Just remember to put something like "Interview Follow-up" or "Thank you for the Interview" in the subject line and remember that the email thank you notes should follow the same guidelines used in traditional thank you notes. Applicants should send formal correspondences 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.
 - **Traditional Mail Thank You Notes:** If the company you interviewed with is formal and traditional, use regular snail mail to send your thank you note. Should it be handwritten or typed? Typed is standard. Not only will you show that you are business-like, you'll also prove you know how to put together the salutation, format a letter and sign off. Handwritten notes are appropriate if you'd like to extend your thanks to others in the office that helped you out. For example, if a receptionist, assistant, office manager, or other person involved with the interviewing process was especially helpful—say they took you to lunch or guided you from office to office—then a handwritten note is a nice gesture to show your appreciation.
- **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. Also, remember to ask for a business card at the conclusion of each interview - that way you'll have the contact information for you thank you letters. Use your interview 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.
- **Use the note to confirm your serious interest in and/or qualifications for the position, but keep the letter SHORT:** The letter should only be one-page with a suggested format of three brief paragraphs.

Sample Thank You Note Format:

Your Address

Date

Mr./Ms. Name of Interviewer

Title

Company Name

Address

Dear Mr./Ms. Name of Interviewer:

1st Paragraph: Thank the interviewer for his/her time (for the interview, for the opportunity to discuss the position, etc.) and consideration. You may also express how much you enjoyed the meeting and learning more about the position (use the title of the position) at his/her firm. Mention the date of the contact.

2nd Paragraph: Personalize it! Mention something that you learned that enhanced your interest in the position or a skill or experience that you were not able to discuss during your contact, OR address a particular topic of 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); OR 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). Be enthusiastic and sincere with your comments. The notes you jotted down after your interview will help you formulate comments for this second paragraph.

3rd Paragraph: Thank the employer once again for his/her interest in you as a candidate. You may also write something to the effect of "I look forward to learning of your decision" or "I am excited about gaining more knowledge in the field of advertising" or "The position at your firm sounds like an exciting opportunity." Tell the employer that you look forward to hearing from them.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Tips

- Maintain a professional tone in the note: No matter how friendly a relationship you feel you have developed with the person, to whom you are writing, be professional. The note will probably become part of your personnel file and be read by others.
- Other tips: Remember to carefully proof read each letter for spelling and grammar errors. Use business stationery or notepaper
- Follow up: Follow up the thank you letter with a phone call a week later: Follow-up with a telephone call to the employer within a week (or sooner, if the employer had a shorter timetable) to ask about the position. And do continue to build rapport and sell your strengths during the phone call.
- Alert your references: Tell your references that they may be getting a phone call from the employer.