

How Important is Follow-Up?

VERY! Follow-up/thank you letters should be sent after each informational interview, grad school interview, and job or internship interview. Follow-up should also take place two weeks after you have applied for a position or if you have not heard back from the employer.

Tips:

- A letter can set you apart from other candidates and the recipient will read your name and think about you one more time.
- Your letter gives you an opportunity to introduce additional information or an important skill or experience that you may have neglected to mention in the interview or in your application. Reference sample A on page 50.
- Restate your interest in and enthusiasm for the position. If you have decided that the job is not of interest to you, either before or after the offer is extended, use the letter to thank the interviewer for her/his time (a second round interview or higher warrants a personal phone call). Explain that you feel the position is not the best fit for your career goals at this time. This letter/phone call provides closure to the interview process and allows for the possibility of future professional contact with the company or interviewer. Reference sample B on page 50.
- Send a customized letter to each individual with whom you spent a significant amount of time.
- Remember that you are still being evaluated and your writing is one of the criteria. Be certain the letter is free of typos and grammatical errors.
- Send a letter of acceptance if accepting an offer. Reference sample C on page 51.

TYPE, WRITE OR EMAIL?

Some professionals argue that a handwritten letter conveys a personal touch and may imply sincerity. Others argue that a typed letter exhibits the level of professionalism that the employer can expect you to maintain while on the job. Also note that some industries move very quickly and rely heavily on technology; therefore, they may prefer email. Reference sample E on page 51.

Guidelines:

- If your handwriting is not legible, type the letter. Illegibility will do more harm than good.
- Consider the industry. A handwritten letter may be acceptable in some fields but not others.
- Consider the formality of the company. A handwritten letter may be inappropriate.
- When in doubt, err on the conservative side (type the letter).

WHAT IF THEY ARE MAKING A QUICK

DECISION? If, during the interview, you learn that an offer will be made soon, email your letter. An email message will usually be read by the recipient the day it is sent. Remember, a business letter sent via email should be just as carefully written and proofread as a letter you would print and mail. Reference sample D on page 51.

HOW LONG SHOULD I EXPECT TO WAIT FOR A RESPONSE?

In some cases, a hiring decision is made quickly to fill an immediate need. Other times, an employer may be interviewing to fill an anticipated need and may conduct the process slowly. Budget approval, staff vacations, or a busy schedule may slow the process even if the need to fill the position is imminent. Ask during the interview what the next step is in the process or when you should expect to hear something, then call to check on your status when the stated time has passed. Remember, until an offer is extended, every contact you have with the organization is being evaluated. Always conduct polite and professional business communications whether by phone, email, snail mail, or in person.

WHAT IF THE INTERVIEWER DOESN'T RETURN MY CALLS?

When your call/email isn't returned: Be **PATIENT** - hiring you is only one of the many tasks for which your interviewer is responsible. At busy times it may take two or three days to return your call. This doesn't mean the organization isn't interested. However, repeated calls or messages from you in one day could tip the balance against you.

WHAT IF I AM ASKED TO LEAVE A MESSAGE?

It is usually best to leave a message or voicemail for your interviewer if she is not available when you call. Be prepared with what you want to say. Be sure to include your name, number, and reason for calling. For example, "**This is Rudy Leek calling to check on my current status. I am still interested in the sales position for which I interviewed on the 8th. I would like to know if you would like any additional information and when I should expect to hear something from you. My number is 999-909-9999. Again, this is Rudy Leek and my number is 999-909-9999.**"



Remember: It is not uncommon for professionals to take at least 2-3 days to return a phone call.

SAMPLE A - FOLLOW-UP/THANK YOU LETTER

(Be sure to use your own words so you don't sound like every other Muhlenberg student who used this guide.)

My Street Address
My City, State ZIP
Today's Date

Individual Interviewer
Only-The-Best Inc.
Accountants Avenue
City of Credits, State ZIP

Dear Mr. Interviewer,

It was a pleasure to meet with you on Tuesday, October 10 in the Career Center at Muhlenberg College. Thank you for taking the time to discuss my qualifications for the Staff Accountant position at Only-The-Best Inc. After our meeting, I am even more enthusiastic about a position with your company.

As discussed, my internships and classroom experience have prepared me quite well for this position. I've excelled at serving smaller clients, reconciling balance sheets and income statement accounts, and preparing financial statements. I greatly enjoy working with clients and their businesses. Enclosed please find a letter of recommendation written by my internship supervisor, which will attest to the quality of my performance. Further, I recently served as the project leader in my marketing research class. I am particularly proud of this accomplishment because it illustrates my ability to lead a group of peers in a collaborative project and accomplish the task prior to the deadline.

I sense a good match between my qualifications and your hiring needs. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future regarding my status; my number is 999-999-9999. Again, thank you for your interest in me as a candidate. If I can provide you with any additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Confident and Capable

Enclosure

SAMPLE B - DECLINE LETTER

(Be sure to use your own words so you don't sound like every other Muhlenberg student who used this guide.)

My Street Address
My City, State ZIP
Today's Date

Individual Interviewer
Only-The-Best Inc.
Accountants Avenue
City of Credits, State ZIP

Dear Mr. Interviewer,

Thank you for extending me a job offer with Only-The-Bes Inc. After considering it further, I have decided to decline your offer. Although I recognize the Staff Accountant position as a good opportunity, I feel that it would not be the best fit for my career goals at this time. Given my interest in working with many clients, I've decided to work in auditing for a public accounting firm. I appreciate your considering my candidacy for the position and investing the time to meet with me.

Once again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Confident and Capable

SAMPLE C - LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

(Be sure to use your own words so you don't sound like every other Muhlenberg student who used this guide.)

My Street Address
My City, State ZIP
Today's Date

Individual Interviewer
Only-The-Best Inc.
Accountants Avenue
City of Credits, State ZIP

Dear Mr. Interviewer:

Thank you for extending me a job offer. It is with pleasure that I write to you to accept. I am excited about starting my career with Only-The-Best Inc.

I am glad that you have recognized that my qualifications and skills make me a good fit for the Staff Accountant position. I can assure you that I will work hard to fulfill my responsibilities and make a meaningful contribution to Only-The-Best Inc. I have already begun plans to make the transition to living in City of Credits as smooth as possible and look forward to meeting my colleagues.

As we discussed, my start date will be Tuesday, September 6, 2007. I will see you in your office at 8:00 AM. If you should need to contact me before then, my number is 999-999-9999. Again, thank you for giving me this exciting opportunity. I look forward to seeing you on the 6th.

Sincerely,

Confident and Capable

**SAMPLE D - FOLLOW-UP/THANK YOU LETTER
(E-MAIL, SHORT VERSION)**

(Can be on personal letterhead, resume-style paper, or a simple note card.)

Dear Ms. Executive Producer,

I would like to thank you for taking the time to share your insights into the world of television production with me. The tour of Channel 69 has really piqued my interest. I am considering an internship next semester to learn even more.

The informational interview with you has helped me tremendously in my career exploration.

Sincerely,

TV Watcher

**SAMPLE E - FOLLOW-UP/THANK YOU LETTER
HANDWRITTEN, SHORT VERSION**

January 5, 2006

Dear Ms. Executive Producer,

I would like to thank you for taking the time to show your insights into the world of television production with me. The tour of Channel 69 has really piqued my interest. I am considering an internship next semester to learn even more.

The informational interview with you has helped me tremendously in my career exploration.

*Sincerely,
T. V. Watcher*