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Writing Thank You Letters

Writing a thank you letter or email after an interview is a must. In fact, some employers think less of those interviewees who fail to follow-up promptly. You should plan to send out your thank you letters as soon as possible (preferably within twenty-four hours) after your interview.

Like any piece of writing, it is best to keep your audience in mind. Address their issues and concerns. In general, typed thank you letters are recommended. Consider the "personality" of the organization and the rapport you felt during your interviews. If your interview was a fairly informal process and/or you achieved an immediate rapport with your interviewer, an email might be fine.

In addition to thanking the person you talked with, the thank you letter reinforces the fact that you want the job.

You may also view the thank you as a follow-up "sales" letter. In other words, you can restate why you want the job, what your qualifications are, how you might make significant contributions, and so on. This thank you letter is also the perfect opportunity to discuss anything of importance that your interviewer neglected to ask or that you neglected to answer as thoroughly, or as well as you would have liked.

What if you spent an entire day being interviewed (and taken to lunch) with several people? Are individual notes appropriate or should you write a "group" letter? Choose your approach based on what you think will be most in keeping with the "personality" of the organization. Also, consider whether the interviews had very much in common with one another. If there was a great deal of similarity (i.e., shared concerns mutually voiced by your interviewers), perhaps a "group" letter will suffice. The preference though, would be to take the extra time and send an individual thank you letter to everyone you met with.

Remember to proofread. Check spelling, grammar, typos, etc. If in doubt about the correct names, spellings or titles of your interviewers, call the office to double-check. Your efforts will be worth it!

To mail or to email? In these days of electronic communication, is it appropriate to send thank you letters by email? In most cases, yes. You can get your thank you letter out immediately, rather than have to wait for the postal service to deliver it. If the employer is making a quick hiring decision, time is of the essence. If there is no sense of urgency, you may still want to send a quick email thank you, along with a traditional letter or note. You'll be reiterating your interest in the position sooner rather than later.

Sample Thank You Letter #1 (informal)

Dear Ms. Smith,

It was very enjoyable to speak with you about the ----- position. The job, as you presented it, seems to be a very good match for my skills and interests. I appreciate the time you took to interview me. I am very interested in working for you and look forward to hearing from you about this position.

Sincerely,
John Sample

Sample Thank You Letter #2 (formal)

John Sample
123 Main Street
Anytown, CT 02165
203-555-1212
johnsample@sample.com

August 11, 200x

Ms. Jane Smith
Director of Recruitment & Development
ABC Division
Example Company
19 E. 57th Street
New York, NY 10022

Dear Ms. Smith,

I wanted to say "Thank You" for taking the time out of your busy schedule to talk to me about the ----- position with Example Company. I appreciate your time and consideration in interviewing me for this position.

After speaking with you and the group, I do feel that I would be a perfect candidate for this position, offering the quick learning and adaptability that is needed for a diversified role.

In addition to my enthusiasm, I would bring the technical know how and analysis skills to get the job done.

I am very interested in working for you and look forward to hearing from you once the final decisions are made regarding this position. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
John Sample
John Sample