

Thank You Letter

Purpose

The purpose of a thank you letter is simply to thank the interviewer for taking the time to speak with you. Ideally, a thank you letter should be sent within 24 hours of your interview, but up to one week after the interview is still an acceptable time period. In addition to demonstrating good manners, thank you letters also provide an excellent opportunity to reassert your interest in that employer; provide additional information that was not mentioned during the interview; provide material (e.g., transcripts, writing sample) requested during your interview; re-address a question that you did not answer to your satisfaction; mention a new development in an area you discussed with the interviewer; update your resume with any pertinent information; and, if the interview was for information, to let the person know how valuable his or her advice was and how you plan to use it.

If you met with several different people, it is preferable that you send a thank you letter to each person. Do not send the same exact thank you to each person. Instead, vary each thank you letter for each person. If you met with a large group of people, you may send one thank you to one of them (the senior person, hiring partner, or primary contact) and ask that individual to extend your appreciation to the other interviewers (mention each person by name).

You do not need to write a thank you letter after an on-campus first interview, and recruiting coordinators specifically ask that you do not do so. On-campus recruiters see hundreds of students and do not wish to be bombarded with thank-yous. More importantly, they are unlikely to have a positive effect, since the recruiter will have made selection decisions by the end of the day, before they leave our office, if not sooner (immediately after each student's interview.) Many students still prefer to send a thank-you after on-campus first interviews, and if you are going to do so we recommend that you send a nicely formatted and formally worded e-mail. That way, the interviewer might see your message during the day if they check their e-mails, and recruiters generally don't mind such e-mails.

For off-campus interviews, including subsequent interviews with employers who recruit on-campus, either initial interviews or follow-up second interviews, you should write thank-you letters.

Content

Thank the person for the opportunity to meet with them. Tell them when and where you met. Restate your interest in the position and let the person know how much you would value the opportunity to work with them. Highlight something that went particularly well in the interview ("I really enjoyed our conversation about . . ."), or add something that you forgot to mention ("After the interview I realized that I neglected to mention a research project that I am working on that you may find of interest . . ."). Lastly, you want to restate the timetable for the next step in the interviewing process ("As we discussed, I look forward to hearing from you regarding a second interview"). The entire letter should be brief and concise and generally should be typed. If you prefer to send a handwritten note, that generally is considered acceptable.

MODEL THANK YOU LETTER
(DO NOT COPY SENTENCES VERBATIM)

Your Present Address
City, State, Zip Code

Date of Writing

FirstName M.I. LastName, Esq. (if an attorney)
Title (if known, such as Hiring Attorney, Recruiting Coordinator, Managing Partner)
Firm/Company/Organization/Court
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. (or Ms., or Judge, or Dr.) LastName: (used for all salutations)

First Paragraph. Thank the person for the opportunity to meet with them. Tell them when you met them last and where.

Second Paragraph. Inform them of any requested materials which are enclosed (writing sample, updated transcript, references, reimbursement form, etc.) Mention any part of the interview that went fairly well or bring up a common interest that was discussed. If you met with several people and are writing to one person, mention everyone's name and ask the recipient to thank the others for their time. Finally, this is your last chance to list your strengths as they relate to the position, or mention any information that you feel is important but forgot to discuss in the interview. Be brief!!

Final Paragraph. Restate your interest and the next step in the process, if there is one (i.e., "I am excited about the possibility of working for your firm and look forward to hearing from you within the next three weeks regarding a second interview" . . . "I look forward to receiving more information about your summer program in the upcoming months . . ."). Thank them for their time and conclude.

Sincerely,

("Respectfully," if to a judge)

Your Signature

Type Your Name

Enclosure(s) (or "Enc.," "Encl.,") (if you have enclosed anything)