

THANK YOU NOTES

The Importance of Thank You Notes

Career services professionals often discuss the importance of resumes, cover letters, and interviewing in the job search. The thank you note cannot be neglected. In a tight job market, you need a competitive advantage over other candidates. You can increase your chances of being hired by writing thank you notes. Statistically, less than 10% of interviewees ever follow up with thank you notes. Imagine how positively that 10% will be viewed. A thank you note can make a candidate stand out from the rest of the pool.

How to Write a Thank You Note

Thank you notes should be *sent as soon as possible after the interview*. If you want the thank you note to have the most influence, it must be sent before the hiring decision is made. Thank you notes should not just say thank you; following are some elements to include:

- **Express Enthusiasm**

Convey your continued interest in and enthusiasm for the position. Remind the interviewer that you are a good fit for the company. It is one more chance to market yourself in a tangible way.

- **Answer Unresolved Issues**

Answer and expand upon any useful questions raised in the interview. If you did not get a chance to mention certain points, the thank you letter can address those items. The thank you note is your last chance to make a positive first impression.

- **Express Sincerity**

It must be genuine, sincere, and recognize the importance of the meeting.

- **Personalize It**

Highlight a key point from your meeting that was unique and meaningful for the interviewer. This will refresh the interviewer's memory of you. Interviewers are typically impressed with proof that candidates can listen and can remember the conversation. In addition, if you met with several people, make sure you slightly vary the content of each thank you note. It may not be obvious who the real decision-makers are in the group. No one likes to receive a carbon copy of a thank you note that everyone else received. This will also force you to remember with whom you interviewed, which will make your follow-up more effective.

- **Keep It Short**

The idea behind the "Rule of Three" is that the human mind can only remember three things about anything, and if pushed to remember four, it will forget all four from overload. Choose three points you want to stress about yourself, which might include skills, knowledge, and personal traits. Ideally, these three points should be presented in the resume, reflected in the cover letter, discussed in the interview, and then re-presented in the thank you letter.

- **Typed vs. Handwritten**

For more conservative firms, you may want to consider typing your thank you note. Typing it conveys that this meeting was important enough to take the time to present yourself in a professional manner. However, alumni (and people you know) may prefer a handwritten thank you. This assumes careful preparation, legible handwriting, and tasteful stationery. If you did not answer one of the questions in the interview, a more lengthy, typed letter directed toward the issue may be in order. In general, it is encouraged to type your thank you notes.

- **E-Mail Thank You Notes**

If the employer has an e-mail address on their business card or is a technology-based employer, then a well thoughtout e-mail thank you note may be appropriate. A word of caution: do not make the note overly friendly (many have a tendency to be less formal with e-mail). Also, try to keep your notes to one screen's length; employers appreciate brevity. Choose this method wisely. Some employers may not be e-mail literate, and may prefer the traditional approach. In addition, handwritten, hard copy thank you notes typically get filed in an applicant's folder, whereas e-mail is typically read sooner, but then deleted.

SAMPLE TYPED THANK YOU NOTE

Your First & Last Name
Return Address
City, State Zip

Month Day, Year

First Name Last Name
Job Title
Department Name
ABC Corporation
123 Main Street
Anytown, FL 12345

Dear Ms. Manager:

Thank you for meeting with me this past week to discuss my candidacy with ABC Corporation. I would like to reiterate my interest and enthusiasm in working in the Finance Department at ABC. After speaking with you, I can see how the analytical skills I developed at XYZ and as Financial Vice President of the SGA at Nova Southeastern University would enable me to make an effective contribution at ABC.

I appreciated discussing the accounting career track with you, and was highly impressed with how ABC has developed its unique market niche in the accounting field. In addition, I enjoyed sharing our mutual interest in financial planning and golf.

I look forward to the next step of the recruiting process, and will call you, as we discussed, in two weeks to follow up on my candidacy. Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Doe

RESOURCE

Handout from the Career Development Center at Union College.
