

Thank you & No Thank You Letters

Written communication in the job search process extends beyond the resume and cover letter. You will need to compose letters for a number of other situations surrounding your career, such as:

- Showing appreciation for an interview (the thank you letter)
- Accepting an employment offer
- Withdrawing your application from consideration
- Rejecting an employment offer
- Resigning from your current position

Everything needs to be professionally written and personalized appropriately, and each needs to create a positive impression with the reader.

General tips for all job-search correspondence letters:

- Be concise: say what you mean clearly and simply.
- Focus on the positive, don't mention the negative.
- Keep the letter to one page.
- Always address the letter to one person with his or her correct title and business address. This should not be too difficult, since you have already met and talked with this person.
- Tailor each letter to each situation and person. Generic letters at any stage, especially this stage, are unprofessional.
- Be timely. Your thank you letter should be sent no more than 48 hours after the interview, and the acceptance/rejection of an offer letter should be sent as soon as you make your decision.
- Type the letters, and print on high quality white or off-white resume paper.
- Remember to sign your letters, and keep copies of everything you send.
- Have someone proofread your letters before you send them. Ask your proofreader if the letter communicates that you are a responsible, sincere person who knows how to operate in a professional environment.

Thank You Letter (for a job interview)

Only about 15 percent of candidates write thank you letters after their interviews, so a well-written thank you letter will ensure a lasting good impression from an interview. It should reconfirm your interest in the organization and the position, stress the relevant points that will improve your candidacy, and demonstrate good manners and communication skills. Use a formal greeting such as Dr., Mr., or Ms. (never Miss or Mrs.), since this is a business communication. Use of a first name is overly personal at this point.

Spell out titles, such as “Vice President,” rather than using “VP.” A way to organize your thank you letter might be:

- Remind the interviewer of the position you interviewed for, and the date you interviewed
- Reconfirm your interest in the position and the organization
- Remind the interviewer of one or two of your strongest talents, based on your impressions of what the employer is looking for
- Include your phone number and the best times you can be reached
- Suggest further action, such as a second meeting, or offer to provide any additional information the interviewer might want

Sample Thank You Letter

P.O. Box 123
Charleston, SC 29424

January 25, 2013

Mr. John Smith, Coordinator
Tri-County Media Solutions
345 Green Street
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464

Dear Mr. Smith:

I would like to thank you for meeting with me yesterday to discuss my candidacy for the position of Media Production Intern. I enjoyed meeting with you and learning more about your pre-and post-production work.

I was pleased to hear about the close teaching relationship you have with your interns, and I look forward to the possibility of being able to apply my media and production skills in the work setting you described.

Please feel free to contact me by cell phone (607-871-5555), or email (janejones@g.cofc.edu) if I can provide you with additional information. Again, thank you for the interview and your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Jane P. Jones

Thank You Letter (for information/networking)

At some point in your job search, it may be appropriate to send a thank you letter to someone that helped you out in a different way than by interviewing you. This type of letter would be good to send to someone who spoke to you about opportunities in your career field, gave you a great job lead, offered to pass along your resume or gave you a lot of help finding that perfect job.

Anyone who gives you assistance of any kind in a job search is a potential networking contact at some point in your professional career. Tips for structuring these types of letters:

- Express appreciation for the meeting/service/contact
- Mention some of the advice you were given
- Reaffirm your interest in the career field

Sample Thank You letter for networking/information

5000 Water Oak Street
Charleston, SC 29424

April 1, 2013

Ms. Danielle Wright, Marketing Director
INC Systems, Inc.
222 Ashley Avenue
Charleston, SC 29403

Dear Ms. Wright:

I wanted to let you know how much I appreciated meeting with you yesterday morning. The employment opportunities you described in the sales and marketing departments sound like exciting career opportunities, and a good match for my skills. I would like to reaffirm my strong interest in both of these areas.

I have taken your advice and researched INC Systems' website, and the information I acquired has been enlightening and has served to confirm my interest in becoming a part of the marketing team. I am impressed with many of the initiatives that INC Systems is undertaking, and would very much like to contribute my skills and abilities toward achieving INC's goals for the future.

Again, I appreciate that you have taken personal time to meet with me concerning career opportunities at INC Systems. Thank you for your hospitality and I will keep you informed of my progress.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Matthew Thompson

Accepting an Offer

This type of letter should be used to accept a job offer, confirm the terms of employment (e.g. salary, starting date, testing considerations) and to positively reinforce the interviewer's decision to hire you.

In most cases, you will have discussed all these details with the employer over the telephone or personally, and you might question whether you need to send an acceptance letter. You should do so, even if it seems redundant to you, since it is always desirable to have everything in writing. Also, expect to receive your employment offer with the details in writing at a later date. A way to organize this type of letter might be:

- Confirm the date the offer was made, and the position for which you are being hired
- Reaffirm your ability to contribute to the organization
- Review any terms of employment
- Express your appreciation for the opportunity

Sample acceptance letter

120 King Street
Charleston, SC 29403

May 3, 2013

Dr. Elizabeth Jones, Principal
Lowcountry High School
Ladson, SC 29418

Dear Dr. Jones:

I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your offer of May 1, 2013 for the Earth Science/Honors Biology teaching position. I am delighted to be joining the faculty of the Lowcountry High School, and am confident I will make a significant contribution to the lives of my students.

As we discussed, I will report to New Faculty Orientation at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, August 21, 2013, and will bring the documents necessary for completion of my insurance forms at that time as requested.

I appreciate your confidence in me, and am excited to begin work with you and the rest of the faculty in a couple of months.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Melissa R. Ferguson

Declining a Job Offer

At some point in your career, you may have to decline an employment offer if the terms of employment or job description do not fit your career objectives, personal requirements, or interests. Rejecting an offer should be done with care, making certain the employer understands you have carefully considered the offer. *It is unnecessary to go into your reasons for declining the offer.*

Never act on the thought that you no longer need to be courteous since you will not be working for this particular organization. People in every occupation have extensive networks; you never know when a thoughtless comment might come back to haunt you. This letter should comprise:

- Acknowledgment of the offer
- Sentence to show that you considered the offer
- Appreciation for the offer

Sample letter to decline a job offer

15 Calhoun Street, Apt. B3
Charleston, SC 29403

March 17, 2013

Mr. Paul Davis, Manager
ABC Corporation
12345 Industrial Avenue
Boston, MA 09876

Dear Mr. Davis:

Thank you for offering me the position of Human Resources Assistant with ABC Corporation. I appreciated being able to meet with you regarding the position and being given time to consider your offer.

Although there are several appealing aspects of the position, I have decided to decline your offer. At this point in my career, I do not believe it would be in our mutual best interests.

I want to thank you for considering me for the position, and for the courtesy you and your staff have shown me. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Kimberly S. Watkins

Withdrawing from Consideration

Many students are fortunate enough to get several interviews within a short period of time. **If you decide to accept an employment offer from one of your prospects, you have an ethical obligation to inform all the other employers of your decision and withdraw your application for other positions.**

Your letter should express appreciation for the employer's consideration in granting you an interview. Like all job search correspondence, stress the positive. **Never** say you have obtained a "better" job. A way to structure this letter might be:

- State your decision and provide a short explanation
- Express appreciation for the courtesy shown you

Sample Withdrawal Letter

Box 750
Charleston, SC 29401

May 5, 2013

Ms. Delia Moody, Editor
Lowcountry Life Magazine
19 Avondale Circle
Charleston, SC 29405

Dear Ms. Moody:

I am writing to let you know I am withdrawing my application for the position of Editorial Assistant for Lowcountry Life Magazine. Earlier this week, I was offered a position as editor for a regional sports publication, and after careful consideration, I have decided to accept it. This position provides a good match for my interests and skills at this point in my career.

I would like to thank you for meeting with me earlier this week to discuss the position. I enjoyed hearing about the creation of Lowcountry Life Magazine and I am looking forward to seeing it in print.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Matthew M. Smith

Resignation Letter

Your future is built on your past. The resignation letter can be as vital a document as the cover letter that secured your interview; it allows you to exit a job gracefully and with references and network intact. You may later wish to revisit employment with the company – most letters will remain in your personnel file – and your supervisor may take a job elsewhere. It is in your interest to have him or her think favorably of you.

Express your appreciation for the opportunities provided during your employment and reflect on something you learned there. *Remain positive, even if you are exiting a toxic environment.*

- Include the reason for your departure, and date and submit the letter at least two weeks before your intended last day
- Express appreciation for professional opportunities provided you during your employment and skills you gained
- As always, be concise but not terse.

Sample Resignation Letter

Box 12345
Charleston, SC 29403

April 16, 2013

Ms. Valerie Boxer, Director
Upstate University
123 Fake Street
Greenville, SC 29465

Dear Valerie:

As you know, I was offered and have accepted a position as Corporate Outreach Developer with the Lake Area Foundation in Lake City, Florida. Please accept this letter as written notice of my resignation from Upstate University, effective at the end of the business day April 30, 2013, two weeks from the date of this letter.

While I am excited about my new position in Florida, I am sorry to be leaving Upstate University and the Development Office. My time here has been invaluable and set the foundation of my career and skills, particularly in planning and community outreach. This will be the foundation of my new position.

Your mentorship also has been vital to my development, applying encouragement and structured criticisms to my successes and failures. I can only hope my next supervisor will be as guiding, and as supportive of creativity and independence.

I will miss the staff and students of Upstate University and always think of it fondly. I will stay in touch and keep you apprised of my career and life; I hope you will do likewise. Again, thank you for everything, and best of luck in the future.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Christopher Williams