

Alfred University

McComsey Career Development Center

THANK YOU AND NO THANK YOU LETTERS

In the job search process, your written communication is not finished with the resume and cover letter. You will need to compose letters for a number of other situations surrounding your job search, such as

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

Each 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:

1. Keep your letters personal but professional. Avoid being overly familiar or lapsing into colloquialisms. In most cases, these letters should be typed.
2. Say what you mean clearly and simply, without a lot of big words.
3. Focus on the positive, don't mention the negative.
4. Keep the letter to one page, preferably one-half page.
5. Always address the letter to one person with his or her correct title and business address. This shouldn't be too difficult, since you have already met and talked with this person.
6. Tailor each letter to each situation. Generic letters at any stage, but especially this stage, are insulting and unprofessional.
7. Be timely. Your thank you letter should be sent within a day after the interview, and the acceptance/rejection of an offer letter should be sent as soon as you make your decision.
8. Use high quality white or off-white resume paper and envelopes.
9. Remember to sign your letters, and keep copies of everything you send.
10. 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.

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The “Thank you” letter (for a job interview)

Only about 15% of candidates write thank you letters after their interviews, so a well-written thank you letter will ensure that a good impression from an interview lasts. 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., Ms., 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
Alfred, NY 14802
January 25, 2000

Mr. Del Smith, Coordinator
Tribeca Visual Studies Workshop
345 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10000

Dear Mr. Smith:

I would like to thank you for meeting with me yesterday to discuss my candidacy for the position of Video 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’m looking forward to the possibility of being able to apply my production and animation skills in the work setting you described.

Please feel free to call me at 607-871-5555 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)

John P. Jones

The “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.

Networking is a great skill to acquire. Anyone who gives you assistance of any kind in a job search is a potential contact at some point in your professional career. These types of letters will help make a good feeling mutual. You may want to structure your letter this way:

- 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 Hill Street
Alfred, NY 14802
August 1, 2000

Mr. Bruce Jenner, Designer
Cellular Systems, Inc.
222 Clinton Avenue
Rochester, NY 14626

Dear Mr. Jenner:

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 these areas.

I have taken your advice and researched Cellular Systems on the Internet. Your website was put together well, and the information I acquired has been enlightening and has served to further pique my interest in becoming a part of the marketing team. I am impressed with the success of your company.

Again, Mr. Jenner, I appreciate that you have taken personal time to meet with me concerning career opportunities at Cellular 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 (salary, starting date, testing considerations, etc.), 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 or not you need to send an acceptance letter. You should do so, even if it seems redundant to you, since it's 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 you are being hired for
- Reaffirm your ability to contribute to the organization
- Review any terms of employment
- Express your appreciation for the opportunity

Sample acceptance letter

120 Main Street
Alfred, NY 14802
July 3, 2000

Dr. Carla Jones, Principal
Beverly Hills Senior High School
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Dr. Jones:

I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your offer of July 1, the Earth Science/Honors Biology teaching position. I am delighted to be joining the faculty of Beverly Hills Senior High, and I am confident that I will make a significant contribution to the lives of my students.

As we discussed, I will report to New Faculty Orientation at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 1, 2000 and will have completed the required drug testing by that date. In addition, I will provide you with a copy of my National Teaching Examination results as soon as I receive them in mid-to-late July.

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)
Lisa P. Darnell

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 don't fit your career objectives, personal requirements or interests. Rejecting an offer should be done with care, and you should be sure the employer understands that you have carefully considered the offer. You do not need to go into your reasons for declining the offer.

Never act on the thought that you don't need to be particularly courteous anymore, since you won't be working for this particular organization. People in every occupation have extensive networks, and you never know when a thoughtless comment might come back to haunt you. In this type of letter, you may want to include:

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

Sample letter to decline a job offer

15 University Street, Apartment 18D
Alfred, NY 14802
March 17, 2000

Mr. George Roth, Manager
Technical Design Corporation
12345 Sentinel Avenue
Boston, MA 09876

Dear Mr. Roth:

Thank you for offering me the position of Process Engineer with Technical Design 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 don't 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)
Kendra J. Sims

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 that 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 10001
Alfred Station, NY 14803
May 17, 2000

Ms. Delores Rugby, Editor
Buffalo Wings Magazine
19 Pearl Street
Buffalo, NY 12345

Dear Ms. Rugby:

I am writing to inform you that I am withdrawing my application for the position of Editorial Assistant for *Buffalo Wings* Magazine. Earlier this week, I was offered a position as Editor for a regional sports publication, and after careful consideration, 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 on May 10 to discuss the position. I enjoyed hearing about the creation of *Buffalo Wings* and I am looking forward to seeing it in print.

Sincerely,

(signature)
Brian D. Read