

## How to Write the Perfect "Thank You" Letter

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You should always send a "thank you" letter or note as a follow-up to your interview because it is an integral part of the employment process and because the power of saying "thank you" cannot be overstated. A "thank you" letter sends a message that you are both considerate and professional, thereby hopefully reinforcing the positive impression you left upon the reader's mind. This article was designed to help you to write a "thank you" letter to a potential employer, but you may adapt this format for other "thank you" letter uses as well.

Here is a basic layout format for a formal "thank you" letter:

Return Address. Tab over and type your address near the right margin, followed by the date.

Example: 1234 Right St.

Anywhere, PA 15678

June 30, 2005

Address. Type this information flush with the left margin. The reader's name is typed on the second line. DO NOT abbreviate the word "Attention."

Example: ABC Corporation

Attention: John Doe

777 State Street

Anywhere, NY 12345

Greeting. Always address your "thank you" letter to a specific person. Use the conventional "Dear" plus "Mr." or "Ms." followed by the first name and/or surname followed by a colon.

Example: Dear Mr. Richard Brown:

Never send a "thank you" letter to a person using his/her job title: "Dear Marketing Manager:" Send the letter to a specific individual, and be sure to spell his/her name correctly!

Body. Two average-length paragraphs should make up this section. In the first paragraph, thank the reader for meeting with you and convey your enthusiasm about the possibility of working for the company. You might mention the date of your interview and the position for which you applied. Make a single return between paragraphs. In the second paragraph, briefly review your qualifications and special skills, and how you can be an asset to the company. You might want to mention an interesting topic or rewarding moment from your interview.

Last paragraph. Thank the reader once again for considering you for the position. State your confidence again in your ability to be an asset to the company. Tell the reader that you look forward to hearing from him/her soon, and give a specific date when you plan to follow up with a phone call.

Close. Make a single return after the last paragraph and type the close, aligning it with your return address. Any of the following words or phrases can be used to close: Sincerely, Very truly yours, Sincerely yours, or Cordially. The close is followed by four returns. On the next line, type your name. Sign your first and last name in the space between the close and your typed name.

Example: Sincerely.

Signature

James Brown

Be sure that your phone number and any other contact information such as your email address are clearly stated in the letter.

A Few Helpful Tips

Timely. Send your "thank you" letter within two days of the interview.

Hand-written "thank you" letters are best but, depending on your personality and penmanship, a typed letter can also be appropriate.

Stationery. Use plain, light-colored stationery—solid white, off-white, or gray is best. Use the same paper stock as your resume.

Appearance. Although personal in tone, your "thank you" letter should be business-like in appearance. Use a standard business format. Put a colon after the reader's name. Single space each paragraph. Make a single return between each paragraph.

Each person. If multiple people interviewed you, thank each person individually. Don't try to thank a group of people with one letter.

Proofread. Edit your "thank you" letter carefully. Ask someone you trust to check it over and give you constructive feedback. Look for misspelled, repeated, or misused words and phrases.