MELISSA CARVALHO

ALIGN WITH YOUR TRUE SELF

All Job search letters serve as an example of your written communication skills, your understanding of professional business etiquette, and your enthusiasm and qualifications for a particular job. Also, they provide additional opportunities for you to make a positive impression on a prospective employer. Take the time to draft them and make revisions; they must be free from spelling and grammatical errors. Well-written, strategically timed letters can impact a successful job search outcome —they're that important!

Cover Letters

Cover letters accompany your resume and contribute to your ability to persuade an employer to interview you. We encourage you to include a cover letter even when not requested. Each letter is crafted individually for each position to which you apply. An effective letter will reflect your interest in the position and organization and highlight the match between the skills you have and the skills the employer is seeking.

Avoid "to whom it may concern letters"— make the call and find out the name of the person to whom the letter should be addressed. Not only is this good business etiquette, but also it will make it easier for you to know whom to call to confirm receipt of your job search documents and to schedule an interview. Be sure to use the name of the organization rather than only referring to "your company."

Date

Name of person
Title
Organization
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Hiring Manager

SAMPLE

Introduction (1 paragraph): Identify the position to which you are applying and how you learned of the opening (e.g., through Destinations, a newspaper ad, a friend or faculty member). Express why you are interested in the position, connecting your interest to how you can meet the employer's needs — not just your own professional goals.

Sales pitch (1-2 paragraphs): Introduce the qualifications you have that will create interest in your candidacy. Connect the skills on your resume with the skills the employer is seeking — use the actual job description as your guide. Provide concrete examples of where you have developed and/or demonstrated key skills (e.g., education, employment, unpaid experiences) and how they contribute to your ability to meet the employer's needs.

Closing (1 paragraph): Confirm that you've enclosed requested documents (e.g., resume and list of references). Provide contact information. Restate your interest in the position and the opportunity to discuss your qualifications in greater detail. Indicate that you will follow-up to schedule an interview. Thank the employer for consideration.

Sincerely,
(Don't forget to sign the letter!)

Your name

Job Search Letters, continued.

Follow-up letters

As you conduct your career exploration and your job search, there will be opportunities to send follow-up letters. After an informational interview, you will send a thank you letter. You may also want to keep your professional network alive by letting people know how your job search is progressing or to confirm making contact with a person to whom you were referred.

After attending a job fair, you may want to follow-up with company representatives to reconnect. This letter will serve to distinguish you from the many candidates they met that day and underscore your qualifications and your interest in the position/company. It will be a hybrid: a combination of a thank you letter (e.g., for speaking with you) and a cover letter reiterating your qualifications for the position based on what you learned at the job fair.

Thank you letter

An individualized thank you letter written to each person with whom you interviewed, as well as anyone who was instrumental in coordinating your interview(s) is essential. In addition to thanking people for time spent discussing your qualifications and the position in greater detail, the thank you letter may also be used to introduce information you did not have the opportunity to discuss during the interview and emphasize your continued interest in the position.

Thank you letters demonstrate your understanding of business etiquette and contribute to you standing out from other well -qualified candidates – most of whom will not take the time to write them. They serve to remind your interviewer(s) about the strength of your candidacy when it comes time to make decisions about who will move forward with the process or be given the job offer- especially if you were interviewed early in the process. If appropriate, time your thank you letters to arrive just before hiring decisions are being made.

Letter of refusal

You may get a job offer that you ultimately determine you don't want. You may decide after an initial interview that the position is not right for you and you don't want to continue with the interview process. Either way, you need to quickly communicate that you are no longer a candidate for the position. Do so in a professional manner that will not damage future relationships with the person or the organization.

Write a brief letter stating that while you appreciate being considered for the position, it is not the right position for you at this point in your career. Wish them success in their search and indicate that you would like to be considered if a more appropriate position opens in the future.

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