



# *Cover Letters & Thank You Letters*

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College of Education

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# Effective Cover Letter Writing

## **Cover Letters:**

- Highlight your communication skills and related experiences
- Emphasize additional skills and abilities not found in your résumé
- Discuss what makes you different from other applicants
- Provide information about what you can do for the employer

## **Cover Letter Tips:**

- Include all contact information
- Use tone of moderate confidence
- Use concrete examples of your experiences and abilities
- Talk about what you can offer the employer
- Indicate when you will follow up
- Be direct in requesting an interview

## **Elements of Cover Letters:**

1. Your Address Information (optional)
2. Date
3. Employer Address
4. Salutation
5. Introductory Paragraph
6. Body of Letter (1 or 2 paragraphs)
7. Closing Paragraph
8. Complimentary Close
9. Signature
10. Enclosures



## Elements of Cover Letters:

1. Your Address Information (optional) – place this information at the top of the page. Full Contact Information Includes:
  - Name
  - Street or Post Office Box
  - City, State, Zip
  - Phone Number
2. Date – enter the full date on the right or left side of the cover letter and follow the date with four returns
3. Employer Address – enter the complete address of the employer
4. Salutation – include the name of the point-of-contact or if you don't have this information address it to the committee:
  - Dear Mr./Ms. Jones:
  - Dear Dean Jones:
  - Dear Selection Committee:
5. Introductory Paragraph – state the position for which you are applying and how you learned of the opening, show your enthusiasm for the position, provide a transition sentence that links your education, experience, skills, or background
6. Body of Letter – it should contain no more than one or two paragraphs, highlight your key strengths and qualifications, describe how you will add value to the organization, and how you will help the organization meet their desired goals
7. Closing Paragraph – you should refer to your enclosed résumé and/or application, restate your interest in the position, request an interview, and state what you will do to follow up
8. Complimentary Close – use a close that is professional and that is not overly “familiar” sounding, place the complimentary close on the second line after the end of the last paragraph, the word “Sincerely” is professional and appropriate
9. Signature – sign the letter in blue or black ink, using blue ink emphasizes the letter is not a reproduction
10. Enclosures – include “Enclosures” on the second line after your printed name, then list the enclosure after the title line “Enclosures”

## How To Write a Cover Letter

Date

Employer Name  
Organization  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

Dear Ms. Mr. or Dr. Employer,

Explain why you are writing. Name the position, field or general area about which you are asking. If a current employee or contact suggested that you follow up with this opening, include his or her name and the date.

Expand on the information in your résumé. If you have had experience or specialized training related to the position, point it out. State information requested in the advertisement and highlight your relevant experience and skills, indicating how they relate to the position. Mention one or two qualifications you think would be of greatest importance to the employer, addressing your remarks to his/her point of view.

Close by making a specific request for an interview or suggest a specific date and time that you will telephone to establish an appointment. You may wish to state: I will call your office on a specific date, (one week from the day you mail the letter) to confirm a convenient time for an interview. (Don't forget to call!) Make sure that your closing statement is positive and makes a request for specific action from the reader. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your handwritten signature)

Type your name

Enclosure(s)

## Sample Cover Letter #1

May 1, 2008

Mr. Richard Tapia  
Round Rock Express  
3400 East Palm Valley Blvd.  
Round Rock, TX 78665

Dear Mr. Tapia,

I am contacting you because I am interested in the Management/Marketing internship that is available with the Round Rock Express. I am currently in the process of completing my Sport Management degree at the University of Texas at Austin and would like to gain as much "hands-on" experience as I can prior to graduating next year.

For the past 3 months, I've been interning with the Frank Erwin Center. I've assisted in researching new market opportunities, assisted with the development of e-marketing materials and provided status reports to management on overall sales and marketing activities. In 2007, I did some volunteer work with ESPN Austin where I gained experience planning and implementing live broadcasts for ESPN College Game Day Events during UT home football games. I have experience organizing safety precautions, stage and entrance set-up and signage. I believe these experiences combined with my education and motivation to excel, make me a strong candidate.

Thank you for taking the time to review my application materials. I would be happy to make myself available for a phone or in person interview at your convenience. Please contact me if you have any questions or need any additional information. Thank you again for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Daryl Harmon*

Daryl Harmon

Enclosure: Résumé

## Sample Cover Letter #2

June 1, 2008

Yvette Thomas  
Austin Fitness Center  
123 Lamar Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Ms. Thomas,

Enclosed you will find my résumé and application materials for the Fitness Instructor/Floor Manager position with Austin Fitness Center. I recently learned about your job opening through the career center at the University of Texas at Austin where I just finished my degree in Health Promotion and Fitness.

I decided to go into the field of Health Promotion and Fitness because I want to help people realize their full potential in terms of living a healthy lifestyle. Having personally struggled with these issues in the past, I hope to be a motivator to my clients.

Last summer I worked part-time at UT's RecSports Center as a small group Fitness Instructor while I pursued my NASM-CPT certification. I was also an intern with Pure Austin Fitness where I assisted with marketing materials, conducted new member drives, free member clinics, oriented new customers to the facility and conducted fitness assessments. It was an ideal learning experience and I appreciated both the professionalism and integrity of the professionals with whom I worked.

Thank you for taking the time to review my application materials. If you have any questions or need additional information, please call me directly at (512) 555-1234. I look forward to speaking with you soon!

Sincerely,

*Jane Walker*

Jane Walker

Enclosures:

1. Résumé
2. Application

# Thank You Letters



## **Effective Thank You Letters Include:**

### **Basic information from the interview -**

- Name of individual with whom you interviewed
- Position for which you interviewed
- Date of Interview

### **A "Thank You" for the opportunity to interview**

### **Comments about the interview -**

- Relate how your background matches the position
- Positive comments about the organization and interviews

### **Statement of your continued interest in the position**

## **Handwritten, Typewritten or E-mail?**

There are many opinions about the presentation style of thank you letters. We generally recommend typing the letters in a standard business-style format (much like a cover letter) and double-checking for typos and grammatical errors. You are being evaluated as a professional and typing your letter confirms that this meeting was important enough to take the time to present yourself in a professional manner.

Sending thank you letters via e-mail is fine as long as it fits the "culture" of the organization and is used appropriately. If an employer has an e-mail account on his business card or the organization is technologically oriented, sending the letter this way may be appropriate. Format your e-mail letter with all the same formalities as a regular thank you letter. E-mail tends to make us a bit less formal and you do not want the note to be overly friendly. Try to keep the message to one screen length; employers appreciate brevity. You may consider following up the e-mail letter with hard copy.

## Why Write a Thank You Letter

You have put together the résumé, the cover letter and gone through the interview – congratulations! Don't stop now – there is at least one more step before you are through. The thank you letter cannot be neglected in today's competitive market. You need an edge over the other candidates and you can increase your chance of being hired by writing them – by marketing yourself to the employer one more time.

You should plan to send a thank you letter as soon after the interview as possible. To be most effective, it should arrive prior to the final hiring decision. A thank you letter should say much more than "thank you". Below are some important points you may want to include.

### **Express Enthusiasm:**

Convey your interest in and enthusiasm for the organization and the position for which you interviewed. Try to be specific about why you are interested and how you are a good fit for the organization.

### **Address Unresolved Points:**

Address any issues or questions that came up during the interview that you feel you did not fully answer. This letter is your last chance to make a positive impression on the interviewer.

### **Be Sincere:**

The letter must be genuine, unique, and sincere – assure them you recognize the importance of the meeting and appreciate their time.

### **Personalize It:**

You will undoubtedly be one of many interviewees in a short time period – you need to set yourself apart from the other candidates so they will remember you when you leave. In your letter, highlight a key point from your interview that you believe the interviewer will remember, and therefore remember you. Additionally, if you meet with more than one person, consider sending them all thank you letters, each one a bit different; you may not know exactly who in the group will be making the decisions.

### **Make One Last First Impression:**

Interviewers, especially if they are interviewing several people in a short time period, will typically only remember 3-5 things about you. Choose 3-5 points about your candidacy – the best you have to offer – and highlight it your thank you letter.

## How To Write a Thank You Letter

After an interview, write a brief follow-up letter. Fewer than 10% of people interviewed take the time to send such a note, so you can be certain that it will be noticed. Use the letter to reinforce your value to the organization, correct any misunderstandings, and add forgotten points. Don't forget to reiterate that you are still interested in the position.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Date

Name, Title

Name of Organization

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Remind the interviewer of the position for which you were interviewed, as well as the date and place of the interview. It is always courteous to express your appreciation.

Confirm your interest in the opening and in the organization. Highlight your qualifications and slant them toward the various points that the interviewer considered important for the job. If you have done anything since the interview which demonstrates your interest in the position, such as talks with alumni, faculty, or researched the position further, be sure to mention it.

Include any information not previously presented to supplement your résumé, application letter and the interview. You may have completed a research project, or perhaps you have received some kind of recognition. If travel, location or a similar subject was stressed during the interview, be sure to confirm your willingness to comply with these conditions.

If appropriate, close with a suggestion for further action, such as a desire to have additional interviews at a mutually agreeable place and time.

Closing,

(signature)

Full Name, Typed

## Sample Thank You Letter

July 1, 2008

John Jones  
24-Hour Fitness  
1122 Mesa Drive  
Austin, TX 78731

Dear Mr. Jones,

I really enjoyed meeting you during the KHE Job & Internship Fair and learning more about the opportunities that are available with 24-Hour Fitness. Our conversation gave me a better understanding of the company and the requirements of the position. The additional information from Andrew was helpful and provided me with a better understanding of the position.

It was particularly exciting to discover the possibility of on the job training and continuing education. It's very important to me to be able to work for an organization where there's a real chance for growth and development. I feel confident that both my education and previous intern experiences would enable me to meet the challenges of the job effectively.

I am glad that I had the opportunity to meet you and Andrew. I am very interested in the job opening and would consider it a privilege to join your team. Please extend my thanks to Andrew. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks again for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

*Anthony Hillman*

Anthony Hillman