

After the Interview - The Thank You Letter

Congratulations, you made the short list and were invited in for an interview, but you're not done yet. In your euphoria on beating out hundreds of other candidates in getting to the interview, do not allow yourself to get eliminated by forgetting the thank you letter, or by writing a thank you letter that says absolutely nothing.

And don't just fire off a quick two sentence thank you. Put thought into the letter; the thank you letter is more than just an opportunity to show that your mother taught you good manners.

Thank the Employer for Her Time

We are all busy, we all multitask, and we all never have enough hours in the day to do what we need to do or want to do. The employer weeded through hundreds of applications and resumes and fished yours out of the pile as a possible candidate - use the letter to thank the employer for considering you as a candidate and express your appreciation for the employer's time.

Reinforce Your Interest

Let the employer know that after meeting with him and learning the details of the position and the organization, you are definitely interested in taking this to the next step and pursue the opportunity further. Above all, be convincing - don't just use nondescript expressions such as, "*After meeting with you I am more interested than ever about this opportunity.*" That says absolutely nothing; tell the employer **WHY**.

Never take job interviews for granted. Until you get the job offer, everything is up to chance, but if you were lucky enough to make the short list and be called in for an interview, don't ruin your chances by not sending a thank you letter, or by sending one that says absolutely nothing.

Reiterate Your Qualifications

Remind the employer how your skills and experiences align with her needs, but don't regurgitate your resume or restate your pitch during the actual interview. Demonstrate that you listened and understood by homing in on one or two critical aspects of the position and telling the employer where and how you are best qualified to help them carry out their charge.

Offer Additional Qualifications

Interviews almost never allow enough time for candidates to parade all of their qualifications, so use the thank you letter as a means of highlighting additional skills and experiences germane to the position. Also, use the letter as means of telling the employer about any qualifications that you may have forgotten to bring up during the actual interview.

Provide Requested Information

Use the thank you letter to give the employer any information he might have asked you to submit after the interview, such as references, work samples, or college transcripts.

Personalize Your Letter

Unless you were the only applicant, or the only person in the world with the rare skill set they were looking for, you were one of many interviewees. Find something from your meeting that will help the employer remember you. Anecdotes from the opening small talk are often effective here because they serve as memory joggers.



All this said though, don't write a lengthy epistle. Keep your letter to less than a page. Three-quarters of a page is a recommended length.

As with resumes and cover letters, proofread, and then proofread again.

- ▶ Did you interview with *Catherine* or *Katherine*...?
- ▶ *Steven* or *Stephen*...?

When you are comfortable with your letter, be timely and send it within one or two days of the interview.

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