

IT 191

Job Search Letters

Overall Letter Considerations

- Email
 - Email is becoming an issue with recruiters
 - Employers suggest we add exercises on proper email etiquette for business emails to curriculum
 - Different companies have different cultures on email
 - Some are fairly informal
 - Some are very formal – include instruction
 - Remember, you don't know how high up the corporate ladder your email may go

Assigned readings – “[email manners](#)” “[email etiquette](#)”

Email tips

- Email
 - Has become commonly accepted method of business communication
 - Email letters should be in business communication format – letter/memo
 - Salutation, greeting, your contact info/sig
 - Student emails – “when is our assignment due”
 - Phone email can be issue

Email tips

- Email
 - In context of job search
 - Construct message as you would if printing
 - In job search, recipient may print it for distribution to interviewers – make the right impression

Email tips

- **Be concise.**
 - Longer messages are difficult to read, and most people will put them aside.
- **Avoid sarcasm and too much humor.**
 - It can come across as rude or abrupt because the recipient can't gauge your tone or body language.
- **Use a descriptive subject line**
 - No more than four to five words.
 - One of the keys in email marketing

Email tips

- **Don't send an email when emotional or angry.**
 - Once you hit send, it's GONE!
 - Much like a social media rant.....
- **Avoid emoticons or textese.**
 - This should be reserved for personal email.
- **Remember, email is not private.**
 - Don't put anything in email that you wouldn't "want the whole world to know about."

Email tips

- **No control after you hit send....**
 - This message contains information that may be privileged or confidential and is the property of the XXXXXXXX Group. It is intended only for the person to whom it is addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, you are not authorized to read, print, retain, copy, disseminate, distribute, or use this message or any part thereof. If you receive this message in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete all copies of this message
- Effective privacy protection?

Email tips

- **Try to respond within 24 hours.**
 - If you require more time, let the sender know you're reviewing the email and when you'll get back to that person.
 - Out of office messages
- **Think twice before hitting reply all.**
 - Ask yourself, "Do all these other people really need to hear my reply?" If not, reply only to the original writer.
 - Replying to broadcast messages
- **Don't send a thank-you email in reply to a thank-you email.**
 - People are thanking someone for a thank you. It just doesn't make sense.

Email tips

- **Start with** *hi, hello, good afternoon, good morning or an appropriate salutation.*
 - Avoid *Dear John* - it's usually too formal.
- **Readability!**
 - **Never use** all caps or all lowercase.
 - **Always use** punctuation and paragraphs
- **Proofread, proofread, proofread.**
 - Turn on spell check! Check on send.
 - Watch for wrong word spelled **wright**

Email tips

- **The proper closing** would be *thank you* or *regards*.
 - Sign your full name when emailing recruiters, etc
 - Full signature is good.
 - After multiple email exchanges first name is OK.
 - Your first name is fine with colleagues.
- **The ideal font** is Arial.
- **The ideal font size** is 11 - 12.
- Other overall business letter considerations also apply....

Email tips



IT workshop



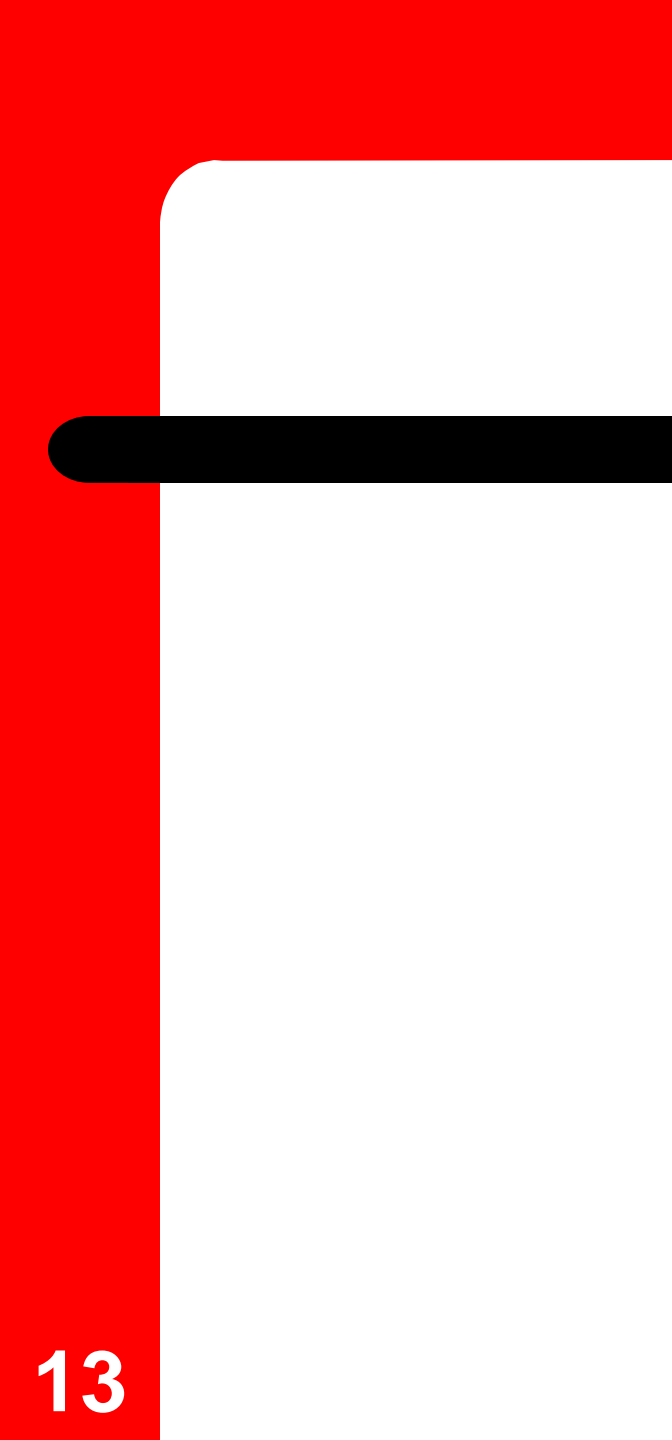
[Redacted name]

To ● Parmenter, Tal

You replied to this message on 3/5/2024 2:24 PM.

Hello, does this event count as one of the 3 Activity Participation events we are supposed to attend?

- Assigned readings – links in Canvas announcement & class presentation
 - Email Etiquette
 - Email Manners
- Canvas Quiz – open at 5:00 pm
 - o 10 T/F and Multiple Choice Qs
 - o 15 minute time limit
 - o 2 attempts – highest score recorded



Is letter writing obsolete??

Is letter writing obsolete??

- Much of the job search is done on-line, but...
 - Not always “fill in the blank” – still need writing skills
 - Frequently you will be required to upload documents

Is letter writing obsolete??

- Many employers will require submission of “cover letter and resume” – even if digital form
 - Do they really need that cover letter?
 - Maybe evaluating written communication skills?
 - Appearance and content....

Is letter writing obsolete??

- Written communication skills are increasingly important to employers
 - Oral/Written Communication skills ranked near top of desired competencies by employers (NACE survey 2023)
 - Internship evals often note “written communication” as an area for improvement

ATTRIBUTE	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS
Ability to work in a team	81.0%
Problem-solving skills	79.0%
Analytical/quantitative skills	76.1%
Communication skills (verbal)	73.2%
Communication skills (written)	72.7%
Initiative	67.8%
Leadership	67.8%
Technical skills	67.8%

Types of Job Search Letters

- Cover Letter
 - Letter of Inquiry
 - Application Letter
- Follow up thank you letter
- Letter to accept an offer
- Letter to decline an offer

Overall Letter Considerations

- Overall considerations for job search letters
 - Many of these apply to business/professional communications in general
 - And email!!

Parmenter, Tal
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code
Phone
Email

Date

Recipient Name
Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code

Dear Recipient Name:

I'm writing you regarding to your advertisement in *Journal of International Business* for a *Marketing Mgr.* role. Based on the requirements listed in the ad, I feel that my 14 yrs. exp. in *Marketing* is a great match for this position.

I am interested in finding a position that will test my skills in *Marketing*. I am available to start in a new position as early as *next*.

I have enclosed my resume for your review. I look forward to further discussing opportunities with *Company Name*. If you have any questions or would like to schedule an interview, please call me at phone.

Sincerely,

Parmenter, Tal

Enclosure

More letter issues

- Remember, communication skills are increasingly important to employers
 - Employer presentations and job listings emphasize....
 - This will be their first evaluation of your communication skills

Overall Letter Considerations

- Show that you are a person they would want to have represent their company/business unit
 - You are intelligent and educated – convey it!

Overall Letter Considerations

- Make sure that your letter makes the right impression – **it does matter!**
 - Professional language & phrasing
 - Well organized
 - Beauty of word processing
 - Organize on the fly – cut/copy & paste

More letter issues

- Pay attention to neatness, grammar, etc.!
 - First impressions are important
 - May not get chance to overcome a bad impression
 - Neatness, correct grammar, etc conveys the idea of competency and attention to detail
 - Lack of neatness, correct grammar, etc often perceived as indication that work habits may be lacking

More letter issues

- Pay attention to spelling and accuracy!
 - Spell check is your friend!! (watch out for auto-correct)
 - Many of us are poor spellers
 - Some people perceive us as less than genius

More letter issues

- Use correct words!
 - Spell check doesn't know it's the wrong word if it's spelled right
 - Pizza Hut “shit manager” vs “shift manager”
 - **Proof Read!!!**



More letter issues

- Use terms and language appropriate for the situation
 - How you communicate creates an impression – right or wrong!
 - Use proper business language – no slang
 - Riley “Has tookeen.”
 - More formal than casual conversation
 - Find the “best” word – [thesaurus!](#)

More letter issues

- When writing a letter, it is far more effective to address the letter to the recipient by name.
 - Contact info in job listing?
 - Internship/career fair contact – **get a card or make a note!**
 - Can't get a name?
 - "IT Recruiter"
 - "Campus Recruiting Team"
 - "Madam or Sir"
 - **Never** "To whom it may concern"

More letter issues

- Be decisive—use active rather than passive verbs/phrases.
 - Trying to earn a B.S. degree...
 - Pursuing a B.S. degree...
 - Want to convey action/motivation on your part
- The thesaurus is your friend!!
 - Find the right word/phrase
 - Thank you for agreeing to vs Thank you for accepting our invitation to...

More letter issues

- Be positive about yourself, don't raise negatives
 - You're selling your good points
 - We all know nobody's perfect – buyer scrutinizes
 - Be optimistic – recognize & strive to overcome negatives in future position

More letter issues

- Avoid semi-negative phrases such as:
 - “I hope” “I think” “I wish” etc.
 - They lack confidence and initiative - conditional
- Use phrases that convey confidence and initiative:
 - “I am certain ...” “I am confident ...” “I believe ...”
- Reader is more likely to have confidence in your abilities if you show confidence in yourself

More letter issues

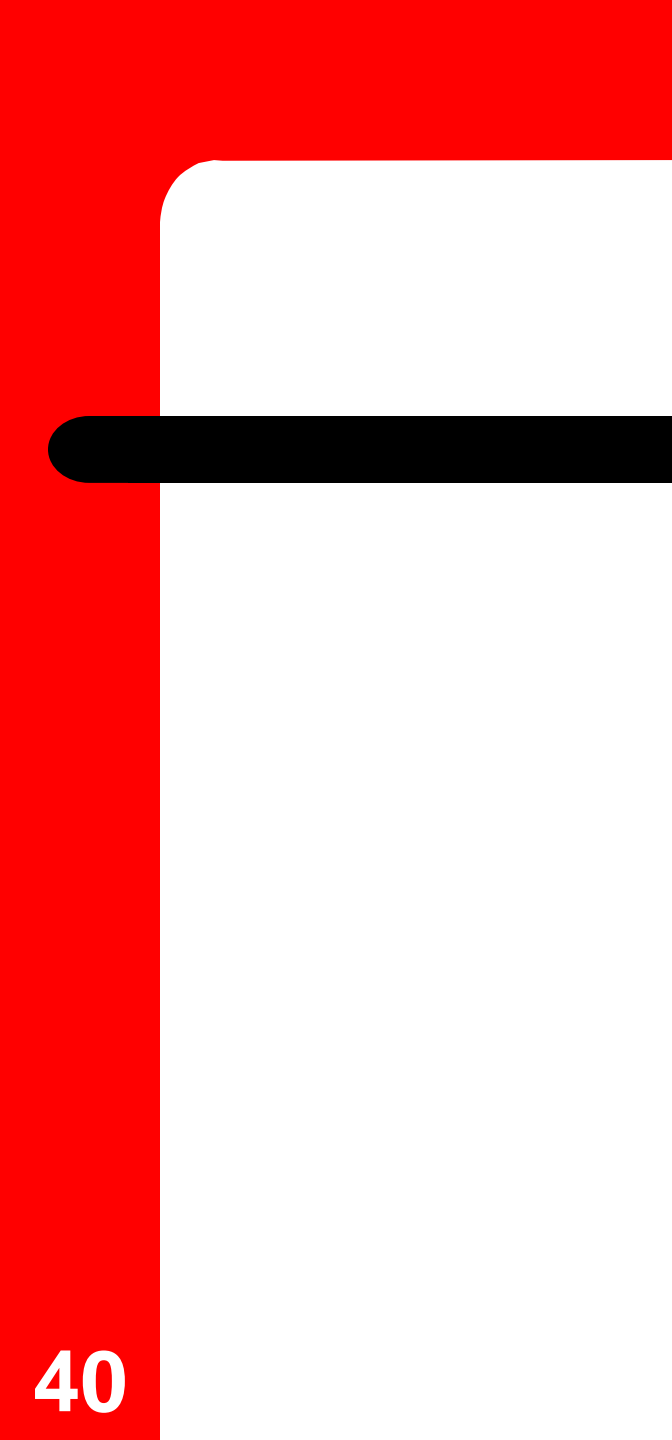
- **The physical document**
 - 8 1/2 X 11, heavy, white bond paper, crisp black print
 - Get it at Career Services
 - type font: conservative font (Times, Times New Roman)
 - 12 or 14 point

More letter issues

- **The visual quality**
 - Proper top and side margins
 - Letters will not be lengthy
 - Position on page
 - Just above centered
 - Standard letter format
 - Word processor business letter templates?
 - Signed in dark ink (black or blue typically)
 - Original signature not photo-copy
 - Blue?

Types of Job Search Letters

- Cover Letter / Letter of Inquiry
- Application Letter
- Follow up / Thank you letter
 - Used following an interview
- Letter to accept an offer
- Letter to decline an offer



Types of Job Search Letters

- “Cover Letter”
 - Letter of Inquiry v Application Letter
 - Not the same – purpose and construction are different
 - Think about which you want to send for your situation

Types of Job Search Letters

- Letter of Inquiry
 - Introduction or request for info/interview
 - Not necessarily in response to a specific opening
 - Internship program
 - Someone you met at an RSO event?
 - Do you have internships available?

Types of Job Search Letters

- Letter of Inquiry
 - “I am writing to inquire about the possibility of a summer internship, as I am seeking an internship for the summer 2021 session. I have enclosed my resume for your review. *My area of interest and study is....*”
 - Always be clear about why you are writing

Letter of Inquiry

- A networking letter to generate an informational interview with an individual in the field/company in which you are interested.
- Introduction – make connection/impression
 - Different from application letter – less specific
 - Kind of like a salesman’s “cold call”

Cover Letter / Letter of Inquiry

- A cover letter / letter of inquiry should always be accompanied by a resume
- Cover letters highlight your experiences and stress previous accomplishments.
 - Brief, but generate some interest
 - Movie teasers – resume is the movie

More on Letters of Inquiry

- If you have a referral, USE IT!!
 - Drop a name.
 - John Doe suggested I contact you to express my interest in employment with ABC corp. ...
- Referral by trusted party is best leg up
 - Number 1 way jobs are filled
- [Sample 1](#) [Sample 2](#)

Types of Job Search Letters

- Cover Letter / Letter of Inquiry
- **Application Letter**
- Follow up / Thank you letter
 - Used following an interview
- Letter to accept an offer
- Letter to decline an offer

Types of Job Search Letters

- Application Letter
 - Applying for a **specific position that is open**
 - In response to specific job listing

Types of Job Search Letters

- Application Letter
 - “I am writing to apply for the Information Technology Intern position posted on Hire-A-Redbird. I have enclosed my resume for your review...”
 - “to apply for...”
 - “Please accept this letter and enclosed resume in application for the position of Application Development Intern posted on....”
 - “in application for your summer internship position....”

Letters of Application

- Always accompanied by a resume.
- Except in **very unusual** situations, is never longer than one page.
- Expands on key elements in the resume.
- Follows a conservative, standard letter format.

Letters of Application

- Customizes the accompanying resume to ***match a specific job.***
 - Directs attention to those specific abilities/skills that you have identified as **key qualifications for this specific job**

More on Letters of Application

- Generally contains 3-4 paragraphs as follows:
 - Opening - An introductory paragraph
 - ❑ ***Applies for the job***
 - ❑ References the Specific Position or job ad
 - ❑ Mentions enclosed resume

More on Letters of Application

- Generally contains 3-4 paragraphs as follows: (cont.)
 - Body - One or two middle paragraphs
 - Highlight ***specific elements from your resume that make you especially qualified*** for the job
 - identify & match
 - Direct reader to see resume for more info
 - Teaser again....

More on Letters of Application

- Generally contains 3-4 paragraphs as follows: (cont.)
 - Closing paragraph
 - ❑ Polite thanks for consideration
 - ❑ Remind of contact info
 - ❑ ***Asks for an interview or specific action step***

Brenda Doyle

Sometown, WY 55555 ■ (555) 555-5555 ■ bd@somedomain.com

April 2, 2018

Mr. Mark George
General Manager
ABC Company
55 Main St.
Sometown, WY 55555

Dear Mr. George:

I am writing to apply for the auto mechanic position advertised on Monster. I am confident my auto repair and maintenance skills would be valuable to your state-of-the-art shop in Sometown.

A dependable and technically skilled auto mechanic, I offer well-rounded diagnostic and repair expertise and a reputation for quality, honesty and integrity. I recently relocated from Arkansas to Wyoming, and have been searching for a mechanic position with a reputable, full-service shop. I am very excited about the prospect of joining your team.

As an auto mechanic for my former employer (XYZ Company), I handled maintenance and repairs on automobiles and trucks spanning virtually all makes and models. I performed diagnostics, maintenance and repairs on engines, brakes, steering/suspension systems, powertrains, fuel injectors, transmissions, exhaust systems and electrical systems—delivering prompt, thorough and high-quality work on each and every job.

I am confident my mechanical skills would benefit your customers, team members and bottom line if I am selected for this position. You can call me at (555) 555-5555 or email bd@somedomain.com to set up a meeting. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Brenda Doyle

Enclosure: Résumé

Letters of Application

- When composing the letter keep sentences reasonably short
 - “cumulative life experiences..”
- Try to begin paragraphs with a different starting word.
 - Interesting for reader

Letters of Application - Opening

- Opening paragraph – *Applies for the job!*
 - Right up front
 - Use active language
- “Please accept this letter and enclosed resume in application for the position of ...”
 - Politely commands “Please do this”
 - **Specifically identify the position**
 - Mention referral as lead-in if applicable

Letters of Application - Body

- Make sure all the information included in the letter is relevant to the job.
 - Stay focused and avoid unrelated personal information
 - Probably not important that your mother's second cousin's brother-in-law's ex-girlfriend lived in the town where their company is located

Letters of Application - Body

- Be concise
 - Say it in as few words possible
 - This will be read quickly
 - Choose words carefully
 - Read it – how does it sound?
 - Professional?
 - Thesaurus – find the **best** word.

Letters of Application - Body

- Refer to resume
 - Mention resume items that match up
 - Highlight related accomplishments
 - Generate interest to encourage reader to review resume more thoroughly

Letters of Application - Closing

- Thank reader for his/her consideration
- Express your enthusiasm
- ***Make a clear active statement that asks for an interview or specific action step.***
 - Please contact me if you think **NO**
 - I will contact you **YES**
 - example
 - *Remember, examples illustrate both “how to” and “how **not** to”*

Proofreading Your Letters - Style

- Readability ?
 - Have proofreader read it aloud to you without pre-reading.
 - Note the places where the reader stumbles.
 - The phrasing in those places is awkward; rewrite the sentence?

Proofreading Your Letters - Content

- Does it have the content that the reader expects?
- Does it include:
 - A first paragraph that references the job and applies for the job
 - Middle paragraphs that amplify the points in the resume which will be most important to the addressee, and
 - A final paragraph that asks for an interview?

Proofreading Your Letter - Content

- Do your words convey the meaning you intend?
 - Sometimes you know what you want to convey – but does the letter convey the idea you want?
 - I already know, but reader doesn't
 - More difficult for reader to grasp

Proofreading Your Letter - Content

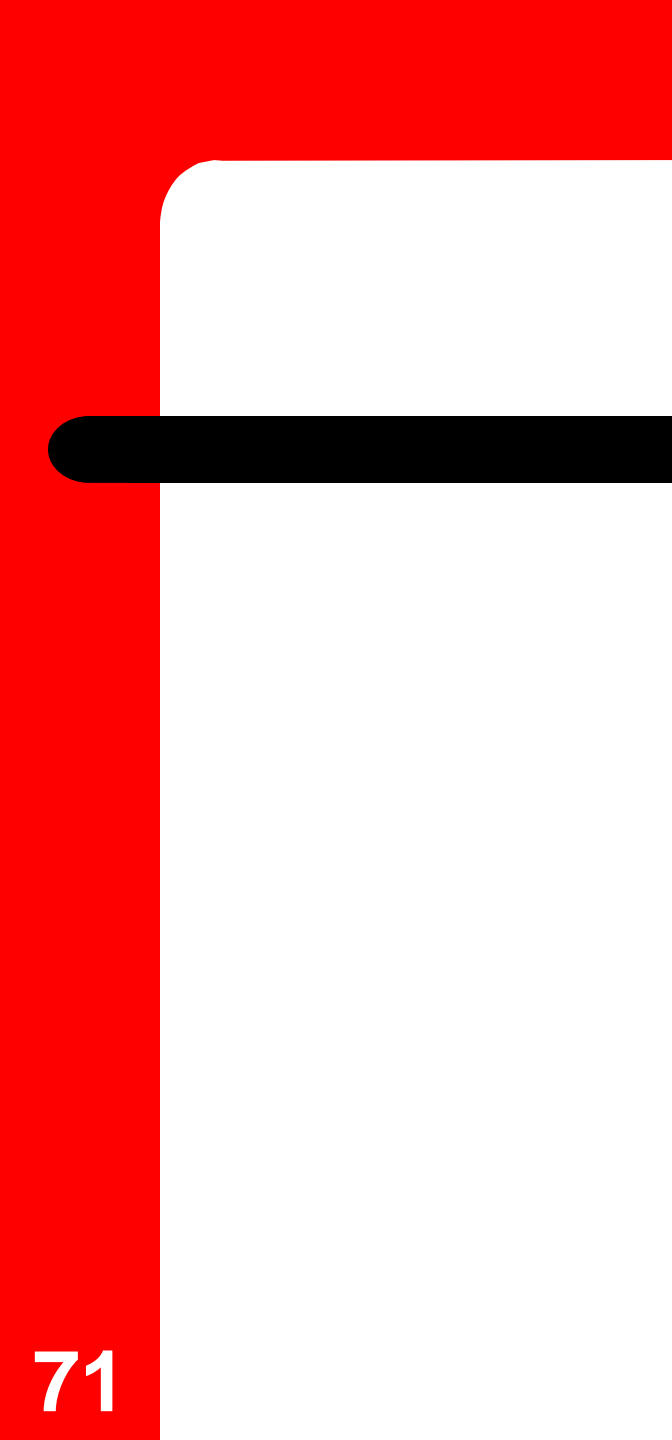
- How to tell:
 - Have a proofreader write one-sentence summaries of the middle paragraphs and compare those summaries with ones you have written.
 - Did the proofreader receive the same message you are trying to send?
 - Any discrepancies between the two show lack of clarity
- It's corny, but it works!

Proofreading your letters – Grammar and mechanics

- Each sentence ends with a period
- Subjects and verbs agree
- Avoids run-ons and fragments
- Proper names spelled correctly

Spell check

- Spell check doesn't know it's the wrong word if it's spelled right!
 - site – sight
 - byte - bite
 - they're - there – their
 - cent – scent – sent
 - its - it's
 - your – you're
- **Proof read!!**



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Follow Up Letters

- How many have had a formal interview for an internship or other position?

Follow Up Letters

- How many sent a follow up letter/email after?

Follow Up Letters

- A follow-up letter is written to thank the person who interviewed you.
 - Good etiquette makes a good impression
 - Not done as often as it should be
 - Who sends “thank you” notes anymore?
 - May make you stand out in their mind
 - Remember you

Follow Up Letters

- Follow up thank you letter
 - Used following an interview / contact
 - After job/internship fair?
 - RSO event?

Follow Up Letters

- Recruiters say:
 - It is not done often
 - It may be unexpected
 - It makes a very good impression when it is done
 - Particularly when it is unexpected
 - It is likely to make you stand out and be remembered.
 - May be the thing that sets you apart, all else being equal
 - AITP pres – only one sent – made the diff. in close call

Follow Up Letters

- The letter serves to remind the interviewer of who you are and what position you are seeking.
 - Keeps you in their mind
 - Unobtrusive but effective
 - Phone call could be inconvenient – letter is not
 - Letter is tangible – will probably keep it
 - May share it
 - Won't be forgotten by busy people, like a phone call can

Follow Up Letters

- Remind & reinforce (repetition = retention)
 - We're not just polite , we're also shrewd!
 - Mention the date and place of your interview.
 - Refer to details of your conversation.
 - Something that stands out?
 - Restate your interest in, and strongest qualifications for the position.
 - If you are excited about the opportunity after the interview, say so

Follow Up Letters

- Multiple interviewers?
 - One letter to primary contact should be sufficient
 - Be sure to refer to others in letter
 - Ask him/her to pass info on

Follow Up Letters

- Via e-mail?

Follow Up Letters

- Via e-mail?
 - Yes, email is acceptable.
 - Remember it's a business communication
 - Follow up with mailed printed letter?
 - Not needed today (used to be recommended)
- Example Example Example

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Types of Job Search Letters

- Letter to accept an offer
 - More and more companies have a structured offer/acceptance process
 - Goal is to make sure everyone understands what has been offered and what is being accepted
 - Get off on the right foot with new employer

Acceptance Letters

- Many companies provide the letter
 - Standard letter with details stated clearly
 - You acknowledge you understand and accept terms
 - Sign and return
- More and more done by email
- But, if they don't.....

Acceptance Letters

- Accept the offer in first sentence.
 - Do this even if a verbal acceptance has been given over the phone
- Restate the position, starting salary, and starting date.
 - Can feel a little awkward, work on phrasing
 - This insures there are no misunderstandings of what was offered and accepted

Acceptance Letters

- Express gratitude and enthusiasm.
 - Get off on the right foot
- Indicate arrangements you will be making.
 - Giving notice at current position
 - Preparing to relocate
 - Stevie

Along with acceptance letters

- Withdrawal letters
 - Send to every organization where you are still under consideration
 - Assume you are still under consideration unless you have been told otherwise
 - May pay off in the future – strange things happen

Along with acceptance letters

- **DON'T ACCEPT ANOTHER INTERVIEW**
- **DON'T ACCEPT ANOTHER JOB**
 - May be exceptions in unusual circumstances
 - Needs to be handled gracefully
 - Chris
- Example acceptance Example withdrawal

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Types of Job Search Letters

- Letter to decline an offer
 - Handled well, it may open a future door
 - Frequently in email form

Declining an Offer

- Decline the offer clearly
- Be truthful, but tactful
- Leave a good impression
 - You don't know the future
 - Teri, Vince
- Example