



## THE PERFECT THANK YOU NOTE

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Showing appreciation for an interview in a timely, formal manner can make a strong impression.

You just finished a job interview and you're filled with confidence. You demonstrated extensive knowledge of the company and the industry, and you're certain you are perfect for the position. You're confident that the recruiter knows it, too. Take one more step to increase your chances of landing the job send your interviewer a well-written and effective thank-you letter.

A thank-you note should be sent within 24 hours after any interview, says Liz Benuscak, a New York City-based job and career transition coach. It shows the potential employer that you are a serious candidate with excellent follow-up skills. An effective thank-you letter is a brief, well-written reminder that you are the best candidate for the position.

Dr. Richard Bayer, chief operating officer of The Five O'Clock Club, a national outplacement and career coaching organization based in New York City, says post-interview thank-you notes should be thought of as influence letters, which, unlike a basic thank-you note, do a lot more to influence the recruiter.

An influence letter is quite a bit different from the typical thank-you note, Bayer says. It reminds the interviewer about your strengths, and also answers any potential objections. A potential objection is anything the recruiter might think of that would keep you from being viewed as the best candidate for the job. For example, a recruiter can potentially object to your lack of experience in an industry. You can use your thank-you note to point out other professional and educational experience that can compensate for the lack of industry experience and refute the objection. If anything surfaces that can seem like a weakness, you need to address that in your letter, Bayer says.

Your letter also should include specific details that will remind the recruiter of your interview, and of what you can do for the company. At all costs, you want to avoid using a canned thank-you note and write a letter that speaks directly to the person who interviewed you, Benuscak



says. A good thank-you letter will mention points discussed during the interview and how you feel you will contribute to the success of the organization.

Each person you meet during your interview should get a separate and personalized thank-you letter. Any one of those people could have a say in your status as a job candidate, don't miss an opportunity to impress them by not sending a thank-you letter. If you were on a panel interview, then every person on the panel gets a thank-you note, Benuscak says. Make sure you get the business card of each person who interviews you so that you will have the correct spelling and title of each person. It is also a good idea to jot down notes immediately after the interview so that if you need to write three different thank-you letters, you will have something unique to put in each one.

When it comes to clear and accurate writing, a thank-you letter is just like your cover letter and resume even the smallest error can hurt your chances of making a good impression. Your thank-you note is just as important as every other career-marketing document that you develop, Benuscak says. If you have handwriting that is not legible, or if you are a poor speller, type out the thank-you note and spell-check it. Make sure you have someone else proof it.

Although email thank-you letters and hard copy letters are both acceptable, do some research first to discover which method would best suit the recipient. In the hustle and bustle of today's busy world, an email thank-you note is completely acceptable. Benuscak says. Corporate America communicates primarily through email today, but, just in case the interviewer is not a techno savvy person, I would also follow up with a typed letter sent through regular mail.

Your letter should be brief it should not exceed one page and should be delivered immediately after your interview, while you are still fresh in the recruiter's mind. You want to stay on the hiring manager's mind, Bayer says. You want to be the person they think of when they go to hire.