

# 10 Tips for Writing a Job-Search Interview Thank-You Letter

by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.

Many job-seekers put so much energy and focus on succeeding in the job interview that they overlook a key element that comes right after the interview -- writing thank-you letters to each person you interact with during your visit with the employer.

Here are 10 tips to help you write successful and effective interview thank-you letters.

**1. Just do it -- and do it quickly.** You should shoot for sending out your thank-you letters within 24 hours of your interview -- and no longer than about two or three days afterward. If you have a hard time composing letters and are tempted to not write any, fight that urge and force yourself to write something. Studies continue to show that the vast majority of job-seekers do NOT send thank-you letters and that by doing so, you WILL stand out from the other applicants who do not send thank-you letters. As for style and delivery method -- where speed is of utmost importance, either email your thank-you letters or drop them off the next day. As for handwritten or keystroked -- it's more a matter of personal preference, though some feel a typed letter is more professional than a hand-written one.

**2. Compose (and personalize) thank-you letters to each person you met.** Each thank-you letter you write does not need to be completely different -- you can develop a few paragraphs that may be basically the same in each letter -- but you should always try and personalize elements of each letter, typically to something specific from your meeting (such as a shared interest or acquaintance or a key skill mentioned). Make certain each person's name, spelling, and title is correct before sending. (Collecting business cards during the interview is helpful, but if it's too late for that, you can always call the department receptionist/assistant and ask for assistance in getting everyone correct.)

**3. Be genuine in your appreciation.** Write your thank-you note from the heart. Everyone values authentic communications, so rather than using a boring thank-you letter template from the Web, use your own words and feelings to compose your letter. Find a way to express your genuine feelings of appreciation and connection with the interviewer. One word of caution: Don't go overboard with (fake) praise and appreciation; keep it honest and simple. (In terms of looking for examples, certainly feel free to review our sample thank-you letters for style and technique, but then compose your letters in your own words.)

**3. Reinforce your interest and enthusiasm in the position and employer.** One of the first things your thank-you letter should do is stress your interest in the employer and the job you are seeking. Make it clear that you are excited about the possibility of working with the organization. A great way to show your enthusiasm is emphasizing something positive you discovered about the employer during the interview -- or from your research.

**4. Highlight your key selling points and fit.** One of the main goals of an employment interview is to determine if there is a good fit between the interviewee (you, the job-seeker) and the employer; thus, one of your key goals in your thank-you letter should be to clearly express your strong fit with the organization. At the same time, it's also good to mention a few of your key selling points -- points that match exactly to the needs/requirements of the position you are seeking. Even a thank-you letter is a chance to market yourself (and add distance to your competition).

**5. Address any weaknesses or misunderstandings.** In the best of job interviews, an interviewer can question some element of your qualifications -- perhaps not quite enough experience or not quite the right experience, or perhaps not having the right education or certifications. If any questions about your qualifications were raised in the interview -- and even if you addressed them well in your response -- carefully reiterate in your thank-you letter that you have all the qualifications (and ideally more) than the employer seeks. Don't go overboard here, but make your case.

**6. Add content/points not addressed in interviews.** Job interviews are stressful situations and even with excellent preparation, we can sometimes forget to mention something that may be a key selling point. If that happened to you, no worries, as you can add the point in your thank-you letter. As you are summarizing your fit with the position and employer, you simply add the additional point you forgot to make in the interview.

**7. Keep thank-you letters short, concise.** Like [cover letters](#), your thank-you letter should be fairly short and concise -- unless you feel you need to add information or reinforce a question that arose about your qualifications. Most thank-you letters will be about a page long -- about four paragraphs in total -- whether hand-written, keystroked, or emailed. [Editor's Note: For more about format, see this article: [Job Interview Thank-You Letter Formula](#).]

**8. Close your thank-you letter with repeated thanks and appreciation.** End your thank-you letter with a short paragraph thanking the person again for taking the time to meet with you and expressing your strong interest in the position and your hope and interest in seeing him/her again soon.

**9. Carefully proofread/edit.** One of the worst things you can do is to write an amazing thank-you letter, but realize after you sent it that it had a typo, misspelling, or poor construction. Especially check and double-check the spelling of the person and name of the employer. Write a draft of your letter and come back to it later to edit and polish it. Read it aloud to hear how it flows. Have someone else read it for errors. Review your final version carefully before sending it. While first impressions are certainly critical, remember too that final impressions matter as well.

**10. Remember to thank everyone.** A job [interview](#) starts the moment you arrive and ends when you leave, thus anyone you spend time with during the day -- whether in a traditional interview or over a meal -- needs an individualized thank-you for spending time with you. And, of course, once your job-search is over, it's also a nice gesture to thank everyone else who helped you get the position, such as your references.

Questions about some of the terminology used in this article? Get more information (definitions and links) on key college, career, and job-search terms by going to our [Job-Seeker's Glossary of Job-Hunting Terms](#).

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