



# Writing Cover Letters, Thank You Notes, Emails and Letters

Cover letters are an important tool of the job-hunting trade. Here are some tips on three types of cover letters. Each cover letter should contain:

- An expression of your interest in working for the company
- A brief introduction to your career
- A short, compelling paragraph detailing why you are a perfect fit for a current or future opening

## Application letters

- Target to a specific job opening in the company
- Match your qualifications to a position's advertised requirements
- Customize for each job application

## Prospecting letters

- Use to contact employers that have not advertised or published a job opening
- Describe your skills and match them to the needs of the employer based on your research

## Networking letters

- One method to ask for an informational interview or consideration for a job opening
- Make a 'warm' referral connection between you and another person that both you and the recipient of the letter know

## Tips for writing cover letters

- Always include a copy of your resume
- Use standard business letter format
- Limit to one page
- Use three to five paragraphs
- *Address a person* — Try to address the letter to a specific person by name and title
- *State your intent* — Summarize and confirm your interest in the job

- **The T formation** — Consider the ‘T’ letter format, which first names the specific requirements an employer has asked for in the job posting and your corresponding qualifications.
- **The final paragraph** — Mention you will make a follow-up call within a week, perhaps within a few days, to ask for an interview. Thank the person and use the appropriate closing, such as ‘Sincerely.’

Proofread your cover letter and ask someone else to have a look, too.

## Email Cover Letter Tips

- Use the subject line — Application: Job Title, Position Number, Your Name
- Keep sentences to 10 words or less
- Do not repeat resume information or say “see resume”
- Attach resume in the requested format — Plain Text File (RTF), PDF and Microsoft Word are commonly requested
- Send an email to yourself to see what it looks like on a smartphone, tablet or computer screen

## Thank You Letters

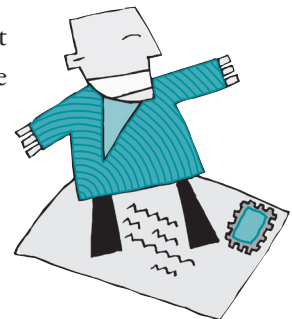
Saying ‘thank you’ in your job search is the right thing to do. This is your chance to sell your qualifications again, or to make one more impression before the hiring decision is made. Thank you may be said in person, by phone, in an informal note such as a simple handwritten card, in a letter written on a word processor or by email.

After an interview or informational contact, send a card, letter or email to everyone you met. Express your gratitude to employment contacts, members of your network and references. This includes informational interviewers and those that offered referrals or company information.

Overall, handwritten notes work best because they are the most personal form of communication unless your handwriting or printing is difficult to read. To add style when composing a word processed thank you letter, use a less formal font.

Handwritten, word processed and emailed thank you letters should follow a standard business letter format. If you are really interested in getting the job, write a brief email within 24 hours after the interview, and then drop off or mail a thank you card or letter to the company.

Send a thank you note even if you do not get the job. Try not to be too enthusiastic in your thanks. Be professional. Let the employer know that you appreciated their consideration, and you are interested in future opportunities.



For more job search guidance,  
visit your local  
WorkForce Center.

888-Get-JOBS  
(888-438-5627) or visit  
[mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/job-guide](http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/job-guide)



*Minnesota*  
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Upon request, this information can be  
made available in alternative formats.

Minnesota's WorkForce Centers  
are equal opportunity employers  
and service providers.