

Writing Letters

GENERAL TIPS FOR WRITING LETTERS

You will very likely find it necessary to write several types of letters in connection with your job search. They are generally categorized as cover letters, letters of inquiry, letters of application, networking letters and thank you letters.

Always address your letter to a specific person within the organization. Be sure to include his or her name, job title and business address.

Type your letters on 8½ x 11-inch paper that matches your resume. The best paper choices are white, off-white or cream.

Don't forget to attach (with a paper clip) your resume to the cover letter! Never send a cover letter without a resume.

Your paragraphs should be average in length; about two or three sentences each.

Be sure to proofread your letters very thoroughly! Check carefully for spelling and correct grammar. Don't rely on the spell-check feature alone. Have someone else review your letters as well.

Ask a member of the Career Services Center staff to proof and critique your letters before you send them.

If you send your letter electronically, be sure to watch for errors in grammar and spelling in the e-mail. Write the note in a word processing program, use the spell check feature, then copy and paste the note into the body of your e-mail.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

P.O. Box 1111
Jackson State University
Jackson, MS 39217
February 11, 20XX

Mr. Adam Young
Personnel Director
XYZ Corporation
1600 Business
Jackson, MS 39205

Dear Mr. Young:

I am seeking the opportunity to prove myself as an accountant with your firm. I learned of XYZ Corporation from the Jackson State University Career Services Center and from professors in the JSU School of Business.

In May, I will receive a bachelor's degree in accounting from JSU. While attending JSU, I have taken several opportunities to apply the accounting principles I learned in class. Through my Internship with PACE Accounting in Ridgeland, Mississippi, I gained a feel for the day-to-day operations of an accounting firm. Additionally, the experience I received in preparing tax returns as a student volunteer has been interesting and beneficial to me. My experiences and accomplishments are further outlined in the enclosed resume.

All of these skills, along with my ability to work well with others, will be an asset to XYZ Corporation. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my employment prospects with XYZ Corporation. I will call your office next week to schedule an interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Anita Davis

Enclosure



- **The introductory paragraph** should persuade the employer to keep reading. You may also identify the position for which you are applying and explain how you learned about the position.
- **In the second paragraph**, describe your main qualifications for the positions the employer has available. This also is where your research about the company should be included. State why you are interested in the position, company, service, or product and tell the employer what your can do to contribute to the company.
- **In the final paragraph** close your letter with a strong statement. Say that you look forward to meeting with the employer, or describe how you plan to follow up with the employer, i.e. telephone call, e-mail, or meeting.



- *Thank the employer for the opportunity to interview.*
- *Emphasize information covered in the interview.*
- *Add pertinent information that was not covered.*
- *Restate your interest in the employer.*

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

P.O. Box 9999
Jackson State University
Jackson, MS 39217
March 16, 20XX

Ms. Alice Foster
Palm Beach Design, Inc.
3344 First Street
White Sands, MS 30005

Dear Ms. Foster:

Thank you for taking the time to interview me last week. Our discussion gave me a better idea of your graphic design and public relations operations.

During our interview, I told you about my graphic design experience with Diamond Graphic Arts. There, I gained valuable experience that would make me an asset to your firm. My devotion to my work and determination would also be of benefit to your firm. Palm Beach Design, Inc. has built an exceptional reputation in the field and being a part of your firm would be a wonderful opportunity for me.

Thank you again, for allowing me to interview with you. Contact me if you need any additional information. I will contact your office next week. I look forward to speaking with you again.

Sincerely,

(signature)

Sara Thomas

SAMPLE ACCEPTANCE LETTER

1111 Tiger Trails, Apt. 34
Jackson, MS 39217
April 22, 20XX

Susan Schultz
Senior Project Engineer
Northstar Commercial Contractors
2300 American Boulevard
Greenwood, MS 39211

Dear Ms. Schultz:

I am pleased to accept your offer to become an engineer in the Planning Department of Northstar Commercial Contractors at a monthly salary of \$2,600. I am certain that the duties assigned to me will be interesting and challenging.

Thank you for your offer of assistance in locating available housing in the Greenwood area. I will contact Ms. Brown to make arrangements for the van lines to move my furniture two weeks prior to my reporting to work.

I look forward to my future association with Northstar Commercial Contractors. As advised in your letter, I will report to your office at 8 a.m. on May 20, 20XX.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

John A. Ransom, Jr.



- *Decline the offer.*
- *State your appreciation for the offer and the employer's interest in you.*



- *State your appreciation of and acceptance of the offer.*
- *Share your travel plans and anticipated arrival date.*
- *Express your pleasure in joining the employer's organization.*

SAMPLE DECLINE LETTER

2006 West Pearl Street
Jackson, MS 39201
February 27, 20XX

John Doe
Human Resources Director
ABC, Inc.
555 Main Street
Jackson, MS 39205

Dear Mr. Doe:

I am very appreciative of the time you spent with me discussing career opportunities at ABC, Inc. I feel fortunate to have had the chance to meet with you.

ABC, Inc. is a highly respected organization that has made significant contributions to the field of technology. However, another opportunity has arisen and I have accepted it.

Those whom I have met through the interview process have been exceptional representatives of your organization. I can only hope that my future career affords me the same job satisfaction your team members have shown.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Christopher Shelby