

# Thank-You Notes

Although resumes and cover letters get the attention, thank-you notes often get results. Sending thank-you notes makes both good manners and good job search sense. When used properly, thank-you notes can help you create a positive impression with employers that more formal correspondence often can't. Here are some situations when you should use them:

1. **Before an interview:** In some situations, you can send a less formal note before an interview. For example, you can simply thank someone for being willing to see you. Depending on the situation, enclosing a resume could be a bit inappropriate. Remember, this is supposed to be sincere thanks for help and not an assertive business situation.
2. **After an interview:** One of the best times to send a thank-you note is right after an interview. In addition to making a positive impression, it creates yet another opportunity for you to remain in the employer's consciousness at an important time. Send a thank-you note right after the interview and certainly within 24 hours.
3. **Whenever anyone helps you in your job search:** This includes those who give you referrals, people who provide advice, or simply those who are supportive during your search. Enclose one or more JIST Cards in these notes because recipients can give them to others who might be in a better position to help you.

Following is an example of a thank-you note.

## Sample Thank-You Note

*August 11, XXXX*

*Dear Mr. O'Beel,*

*Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the position available in your production department. I want you to know that this is the sort of job I have been looking for and that I am enthusiastic about the possibility of working for you.*

*I believe that I have both the experience and skills to fit nicely into your organization and to be productive quickly.*

*Thanks again for the interview; I enjoyed the visit.*

*Sara Smith*

*(505) 665-0090*

## Seven Quick Tips for Writing Thank-You Notes

Here are some brief tips to help you write your thank-you notes:

1. **Use quality paper and envelopes.** Use good-quality notepaper with matching envelopes. Most stationery stores have thank-you note cards and envelopes in a variety of styles. Select a note that is simple and professional—avoid cute graphics and sayings. A simple “Thank You” on the front will do. For a professional look, match your resume and thank-you note papers by getting them at the same time. I suggest off-white and buff colors.
2. **Handwritten or typed is acceptable.** Traditionally, thank-you notes are handwritten. If your handwriting is good, it is perfectly acceptable to write them. If not, they can be word-processed.
3. **Use a formal salutation.** Unless you know the person you are thanking, don’t use a first name. Write “Dear Ms. Pam Smith,” “Ms. Smith,” or “Dear Ms. Smith” rather than the less formal “Dear Pam.” Include the date.
4. **Keep the note short and friendly.** This is not the place to write “The reason you should hire me is....” Remember, the note is a thank-you for what someone else did, not a hard-sell pitch for what you want. And make sure it doesn’t sound like a form letter. As appropriate, be specific about when you will next contact the person. Make sure that you include something to remind the employer of who you are and how to reach you because your name alone might not be enough to be remembered.
5. **Sign it.** Sign your first and last name. Avoid initials and make your signature legible.
6. **Send it right away.** Write and send your note no later than 24 hours after you make your contact. Ideally, you should write it immediately after the contact, while the details are fresh in your mind.
7. **Enclose a JIST Card.** Depending on the situation, a JIST Card is often the ideal enclosure. It’s small, soft sell, and provides your phone number. It is a reminder of you, should any jobs open up, and a tool to pass along to someone else. Make sure your thank-you notes and envelopes are big enough to enclose an unfolded JIST Card.



## STEP 5: Use Your Resume on the Internet

Although the Internet has helped many people find job leads, far more have been disappointed. The problem is that many job seekers assume they can simply put resumes in Internet resume databases and employers will line up to hire them. It sometimes happens this way, but not often. This is the same negative experience that people have when sending lots of unsolicited resumes to personnel offices—a hopeful but mostly ineffective approach that was around long before computers.