

## THANK YOU LETTERS: A PROFESSIONAL COURTESY THAT SETS YOU APART FROM THE CROWD

Writing thank you letters is a professional courtesy that can leave a strong positive impression of you on people. Time is a valuable commodity in our culture. Teachers and university administrators who write letters of recommendation for you and professionals working in your field of interest whom you interview appreciate your recognition of their time and effort.

### A few guidelines:

1. You may handwrite a card or word-process a letter. To follow up after a job/internship interview, writing a letter using standard business form is more appropriate. For jobs/internships, get the business card of everyone who interviews you. If that is possible, be sure that you get that information from the receptionist before you leave the interview site.

2. Begin by reminding the person of the interaction.

e.g. *I enjoyed talking with you yesterday when you reviewed my resume.*

3. The most important and largest portion of your letter consists of your **specific, concrete examples of why the interaction was helpful**. These statements make clear that you listened carefully and that the person's time and efforts were well-spent.

e.g. *Your advice on how to reduce my resume to one page was especially helpful. I have already followed your instructions to use parallel action verbs in presenting my responsibilities. I have also quantified my sales accomplishments during my summer internship with Tri-State Systems as you recommended.*

4. End with a summary sentence(s) of your appreciation.

e.g. *Thank you again for your time and advice. It was helpful meeting with you.*

5. Conclude with *Sincerely yours*, and your signature.

This is the beginning of your professional interaction. The key is to stay in touch, especially with people working in your field of interest. You can send follow-up cards or letters telling about internships, classes you're taking, extracurricular activities that are building skills, etc., each quarter or at least once a year.