

The job search journey requires that you pack along your best communication skills. Letters are used throughout the employment process. The most common cover letters are application letters, which precede your resume and explain who you are and why you are right for the job. Inquiry letters express interest in organizations when you are not sure if there are open positions. Networking letters serve to introduce you to professionals in your field of interest and help you develop contacts.

Types Of Correspondence

Application Letters

- Always address the letter to a specific person.
- State clearly what position you are seeking.
- Tell specifically about how you learned about the organization.
- Relate your experience to the specific qualifications for the position.
- Don't assume that the employer will contact you. Say something like, "I will contact you in the next two weeks to see if you require any additional information." Then make the call!

Inquiry Letters

- Keep the letter brief and to the point.
- Indicate how you found the organization's name.
- Include a quick blurb about yourself and your goals.
- Tell why you are interested in the organization.
- End the letter with how you plan to follow up.

Networking Letters

- Tell the professional how you got their contact information.
- Briefly inform the professional about yourself.
- Clearly state what you are seeking: an informational interview, a telephone conversation, etc.

Thank-You Letters

- Send thank-you letters within 24 hours of the event.
- If you are thanking an employer for an interview, highlight your continued interest in the position. Re-emphasize your skills by referring to specifics discussed in the interview and address additional qualifications that were not discussed in the interview.
- If thanking more than one contact in an organization, send separate thank-you letters to each.

Email Correspondence

- Use a meaningful subject header that is appropriate to the topic.
- Send the email from a business-like address. Utilize a professional salutation.
- Be professional in your communications. Do not use slang, abbreviations, or other informalities.
- Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers, or multicolored backgrounds.
- Always proofread your email before sending!

General Tips

- Edit! Make your letter error-free, concise, and professional!
- Be yourself! Express yourself in a business-like, but always natural manner.
- Avoid too much "borrowing" from sample letters.
- Use 8 1/2" x 11" high-quality paper, preferably the same type as used for your resume.
- Produce laser-quality print. Choose an easy-to-read font.
- Keep a copy of every letter you send and mark your calendar for appropriate follow-up.

Sample Application Letter

650 E. Parkway S., Box 123
Memphis, TN 38112

June 10, 2015

Ms. Sabrina Moore
Director
The National Civil Rights Museum
450 Mulberry St.
Memphis, TN 38112

Dear Ms. Moore:

Through the Career Services Office at CBU, I learned that you have a curatorial position available in historical research. I am very interested in this opportunity and feel confident in my abilities to perform the outlined responsibilities.

Throughout my life, I have been greatly interested in all aspects of American history. I am a docent at the Mud Island Museum and volunteer to conduct tours and answer questions from tourists. As Treasurer of the Civil War Reenactors Club, I helped raise funds for traveling expenses to Fort Sumter to research the battle. I have also studied the politics of antebellum Sumter and the atrocities of the slave trade. When I worked as a camp counselor at Grandfather Mountain Wilderness Retreat, I performed historical research on Appalachian culture which is currently utilized by the Linville Historical Society. In addition to my experience, I offer creativity and maturity, which would serve me well in this role. My analytical skills, coupled with my research experience, will assist in the research of exhibits, as well as the planning of programs and events at the National Civil Rights Museum.

I have enclosed my resume, which provides additional information about my experience and qualifications. I am extremely interested in the opportunity and would welcome the opportunity to interview with you at your convenience. I will call you during the week of June 24 to verify receipt of my application materials. If you would like to call me prior to that time, I can be contacted at (901) 843-3800. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Smith

Enclosure

Networking Letter Outline

Your Present Address
City, State, Zip Code
Date of Letter

Name
Title
Company/Organization
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear. Mr./Ms. Last Name:

1st Paragraph “What’s my intention?” – Identify your reasons for writing. If you are seeking out information on a career field or specific occupation, state this. Identify how you learned of the person to whom you’re writing. (*Dr. John Doe, professor of Finance at CBU, suggested that I contact you.*)

2nd Paragraph “Who am I and Why I Want to speak with You?” – Identify various aspects of yourself, including year in school, major, career goals, as well as skills and experiences you’ve had that relate to the career/position you want to learn more about. (*As a junior at Christian Brothers University majoring in Business, I am eager to learn more about the various career opportunities in the finance industry.*)

3rd Paragraph “How Will I Follow-up?” – Identify your plan for connecting with this person. (*I shall call you next week to see if we can arrange a brief meeting at your convenience.*) Thank them for their time.

Sincerely,

Handwritten Signature

Typed Name

Letter of Inquiry Outline

Your Present Address
City, State, Zip Code

Date of Letter

Name
Title
Company/Organization
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear. Mr./Ms. Last Name:

1st Paragraph “What’s my intention?” – Identify your reasons for writing. If you are seeking information on a specific employer or you’re writing to inquire about the possibility of employment, state this. Identify how you learned of the person or organization to whom you’re writing. (Through the Memphis Business Journal, I learned of American Real Estate Agencies. As a senior, majoring in Business, I am extremely interested in learning more about potential job opportunities at your organization.)

2nd Paragraph “Who am I and Why You Should Hire Me?” – Identify various aspects of yourself, including year in school, major, career goals, as well as skills and experiences you’ve had that relate to the career/position you are wanting to learn more about. Highlight one or two of your strongest qualifications and explain how they relate to the needs of the employer. (*Through my public relations experience as Communication Chair of WWW organization, I have developed selling and communication skills that are essential to real estate.*) Explain why you are specifically interested in the employer and the type of work/location, etc.

3rd Paragraph “How Will I Follow-up?” – Refer the reader to the enclosed resume. Close the letter with a strong interest in pursuing the next step of an informational interview, an employment interview, and/or additional information about open positions. State how you intend to follow up (*I will call you during the week of to arrange a convenient time to discuss career options within your organization.*) Thank them for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten Signature

Typed Name

Enclosure

Sample Thank-You Letter

650 East Parkway South, Box 123
Memphis, TN 38104

July 21, 2015

Ms. Juanita Moore
Director
The National Civil Rights Museum
450 Mulberry St.
Memphis, TN 38112

Dear Ms. Moore:

I sincerely enjoyed meeting with you today to discuss the internship at the National Civil Rights Museum. The information you shared regarding the goals and vision of the National Civil Rights Museum was very enlightening. My interest in the internship was heightened as a result of my interview.

As I mentioned during our discussion, I have gained experience in historical research and planning major events through the Mud Island Museum, Civil War Reenactors Club, and Grandfather Mountain Wilderness Retreat. The internship closely matches my career interests and goals. I remain very interested in the position and would enjoy working with you, Mr. Perry, and Ms. Zink.

Thank you once again for taking the time to discuss the internship with me. I would bring to the internship dedication, maturity, and a positive attitude toward the worthwhile projects of the National Civil Rights Museum. If you need additional information, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

John Smith