



# Correspondence for the Job Search

Written correspondence is an integral part of the job search process. Many job applications request that a cover letter accompany your resume; however that is only one form of communication you will likely draft. There are seven basic letters to be aware of, each of which have a time and place in the process. Be aware that you may encounter many opportunities to communicate, both through email and professional letters; each one is important when creating a positive impression and should be

## 7 Basic Letters

There are three basic letters used to introduce yourself to someone, either in hopes of being granted a job interview or an informational interview: application letters, prospecting letters, and networking letters. Then there are four letters that may be appropriate after an introduction or an interview: thank-you letters, withdrawal letters, acceptance letters, or rejection letters.

### 1 & 2. **Application Letters** and **Prospecting Letters:**

These are the most common types of letter, often called **cover letters**. The first, application letters, are sent in response to an advertised posting. They are focused on a specific job and how you would be an ideal fit for that position. Prospecting letters are used to inquire about possible openings; instead of writing for a specific position, your letter focuses more broadly on how you fit within the industry and organizational environment.

### 3. **Networking Letters:**

Networking letters are appropriate when requesting an informational interview to talk with someone about your intended field of study or career path. This is not the same as asking for a job interview.

### 4. **Thank-You Letters:**

This is an extremely important and valuable tool to show appreciation for anyone who has helped you. Sending one goes a long way toward showing genuine interest and gratitude to employers you've met with at a fair or networking event, those who have interviewed you for a position, and networking contacts who have provided advice.

### 5 & 6. **Acceptance Letters** or **Rejection Letters:**

Whether you are accepting a job opportunity or declining the offer, the professional thing is to do so in writing. In the former you should confirm the details of your employment and express your excitement in the hiring decision. The latter is meant to thank the employer while maintaining professionalism in declining an offer that doesn't fit your career objectives or interests.

### 7. **Withdrawal Letters:**

Once you've accepted a position, it is necessary to contact any other employers you've submitted applications to in order to withdraw your name from further consideration.

Tailor your letters to each position/company.  
Always address it to a specific person!

Carefully consider what you want to say and give yourself plenty of time to edit and re-edit. It often takes multiple drafts to create an error-free, meaningful letter.

Keep your letters personal, yet professional. Use clear, simple language without a lot of excess verbiage or overly complex sentences.

Be just as professional  
in email correspondence  
as you are in  
formal business letters

# Cover Letters...

## In a Nutshell...

**C**reates Interest  
**O**pens Strong  
**a**voids repeating your resume  
**E**xplains why you're writing  
**R**eads well

**L**ooks professional  
**E**laborates on your qualifications  
**T**ells them how to contact you  
**T**hanks them for their time and consideration  
**E**mphasizes your interest in the position & an interview  
**R**efers to your resume  
**S**ignature!



Nita Job  
123 Main St.  
Annville, PA 17003  
123-345-5678

August 25, 2012

Mr. Employer Name  
Director of Advertising  
Ads Incorporated  
100 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Bigtown, PA 54321

Dear Mr. Name,

The first paragraph is your opportunity to tell the employer what job you want and why you want it. Introduce yourself as a potential candidate for the position, indicating your educational background and where you heard about the position.

The second paragraph is your chance to professionally market yourself for the position. Mention one or two qualifications you think would be of greatest interest to the organization and beneficial for this specific job.

The third paragraph is your opportunity to point out how your qualifications tie together with what you know about the company's objective/mission. Explain why you are particularly interested in the company and demonstrate your knowledge of it. This can also be combined with the second paragraph if appropriate.

The fourth paragraph, or closing of the cover letter, is where you ask for an interview and mention your follow-up action plan. If you tell an employer that you will be following up within one week with a phone call, be sure to follow through!

Sincerely,

Nita Job

## Basic Cover Letter Structure