Cover Letter and Thank You Notes

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Tips for a Great Cover Letter

- Make sure it is well-written and meaningful: employers will use a cover letter to measure your writing ability.
- Include the heading from your resume and references page for a uniform look.
- Address the letter to a specific person. If you don’t know their name, call the company and ask for it (be sure you get the correct spelling and gender). If no one can provide it for you, address your letter as “Dear Title” (i.e. “Dear Director of Marketing” or “Dear Finance Manager”).
- Tailor each cover letter to each company: show the employer why you want to work specifically for them.
- Back up every statement with concrete evidence.
- Show that you know the skills you have to offer - and that these skills match exactly what the employer is looking for.
- Keep it simple and to the point-1 page only!
- Ask for action.
Dear Ms. Brown,

As a graduate of the masters of counseling program from the University of La Verne with six years of experience in working with children and families from diverse backgrounds, I believe I demonstrate the skills needed to contribute to the success of the Mentoring Program at Miller Youth and Family Services. I am writing to express my interest in the position of Mentor Program Manager because of my knowledge of your company’s success in changing the lives of youth in the San Gabriel Valley.

I have worked in a variety of social service settings, ranging from school counseling at a California public school to non-profit management in East Africa. Recently, I served as Mentor Coordinator for the BRIGHT Families Project at UCLA’s Division of Community Services. It was my responsibility to run the entire mentoring program, which included recruiting, interviewing, training and managing cases for over 20 mentor dyads. While there, I worked in conjunction with county services in order to best provide foster and adopted children with the mentor that matched their individual needs. I also worked as Social Services Assistant at Armed Services YMCA, for which I provided clinical support services to military families. I assisted with in-home crisis counseling and intervention, and I implemented the use of intake and psychosocial assessments on our clients. This helped us to better track the needs of our population as a whole. These two particular experiences have helped me to develop excellent problem-solving and interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to cultivate trusting relationships with clients and staff from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds.

I believe that Miller Youth and Family Services would benefit from the diversity of my work experience. I look forward to hearing from you to discuss my candidacy for this position further. Please feel free to contact me at (909) ------- or at name.name@laverne.edu. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith
Dear Ms. Brown:

As a recent graduate of the masters in counseling program from the University of La Verne with six years of experience in working with children and families from diverse backgrounds, I believe I demonstrate the skills needed to contribute to the success of the Mentoring program at Miller Youth and Family Services. I am writing to express my interest in the position of Mentor Program Manager because of my knowledge of your company’s success in changing the lives of youth in the San Gabriel Valley.

I have worked in a variety of social service settings, ranging from school counseling at a California public school to non-profit management in East Africa. Recently, I served as Mentor Coordinator for the BRIGHT Families Project at UCLA’s Division of Community Services. It was my responsibility to run the entire program, which included recruiting, interviewing, training and managing cases for over 20 mentor dyads. While there, I worked in conjunction with county services in order to best provide foster and adopted children with the mentor that matched their individual needs. I also worked as Social Services Assistant at Armed Services YMCA, for which I provided social and clinical support services to military families. I assisted with in-home crisis counseling and intervention, and I performed intake and psychosocial assessments on our clients. These two particular experiences have helped me to develop excellent problem-solving and interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to cultivate trusting relationships with clients and staff from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds.

I believe that Miller Youth and Family Services would benefit from the diversity of my experiences. I am a positive person and I work well in teams and enjoy creating rapport with colleagues. I look forward to hearing from you to discuss my candidacy for this position further. Please feel free to contact me at (909) ------- or at name.name@laverne.edu. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith
Dear Ms. Brown,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to interview with Miller Youth and Family Services. I am not only impressed by the comprehensive services you offer for your clients, but also by your staff’s support of and commitment to each other as a team.

It was especially helpful to hear about your experience transitioning into the organization from a county department, as well as your take on the volunteers who work here. I have no doubt that your perspective will be invaluable for whomever you select as the new Mentor Program Manager.

I remain very interested in this position, and regardless of the outcome, I greatly appreciate your willingness to meet with me and share more about the work you do here. I hope that your interview process runs smoothly, and I look forward to hearing from you soon regarding your decision. Please let me know if you have any further questions regarding my experience, skills, and interest in the position.

Thank you,

Jane Smith

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**A. Thank you notes are 4-8 sentences long. Imagine you had an all day interview, and met 5 people. You would use this format to write their letters:**

1. (Same for everyone) Say thank you.
2. (Same for everyone) Tell them why you are thanking them or give your overall impression of the meeting.
3. (Unique to each person) Give a statement about something you specifically appreciated from your time with them.
4. (Same for everyone) Closing lines.

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**B. Who should get a thank you letter?** If someone takes the time to interview or share advice or resources (whether it’s an employment or information interview) it is considered professionally polite to acknowledge it. Everyone you interviewed with should receive one.

**C. Should I send my note by email or via the post office?**

If you know that the employer is making a decision in the next few days, send a short thank you email so it arrives on time. Always follow up with a more personalized hand written note sent by post.

If you’re not sure, you can ask. For example, at the end of the interview, you could ask the administrative assistant or whoever organized the day for the contact information of everyone you met. You can also ask their opinion. “I’d like to send brief thank you notes to Ms. Brown and Mr. Jones. Do you recommend email or paper correspondence?”

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**D. If I send paper correspondence, do I need to use cards that say ‘thank you’?**

No. Simple 4x6” folding cards are excellent for brief, 4 sentence thank you notes. You do not have to use the ones with thank you stamped on them. You may also choose ones with the University of La Verne logo or your monogram (be sure they look professional). Try to hand write them, because this gives a personal touch. However, be sure that you write legibly!