Job Search Correspondence

Job search correspondence includes more than just cover letters. This type of communication may include documents such as thank you letters, apology letters, or emails you send to accompany a cover letter and resume. Each piece of correspondence should be carefully written and reviewed. The following is a list of items considered to be job search correspondence:

Cover Letters

The cover letter is an important part of the job search process. A cover letter (when requested) always accompanies the resume when it is sent to a potential employer. The most effective letters are interesting, informative, and concise.

- **Letter of Application:** This is the most common type of cover letter. When an employer lists a job opening and requests a cover letter, they are really asking for a letter of application. This type of letter is sent to “apply” for a position that has been advertised and that the employer is seeking to fill. When writing letters of application, it’s important to connect your experiences to the position and describe how you fulfill the job requirements.

- **Letter of Introduction:** Sent to an employer to “inquire” about the possibility of available positions or to ask for information about the organization. This type of letter can be used to inquire about job or internship possibilities, to request company information, or to request a meeting to discuss future opportunities within the organization. When writing letters of inquiry, include details about your qualifications that will prompt the employer to decide that a discussion with you would be worthwhile.

See pg. 39 for a sample Letter of Introduction.

Other Correspondence

Other examples of job search correspondence could include:

- **Letter of Acceptance:** Sent to acknowledge an offer of employment and to restate the terms of employment, such as starting date and salary offer.

- **Letter of Withdrawal:** Sent to an employer to withdraw from consideration, usually after an interview.

- **Letter of Apology:** Sent to an employer within 24 hours of when a candidate has missed a scheduled job interview, information interview or meeting.

- **Letter of Thanks:** Sent to express gratitude to an employer, usually for the opportunity interview. A handwritten note always makes a positive impression, although an email is also appropriate, especially if a hiring decision will be made quickly. It is important to send thank you notes immediately after your interview and try to individually thank each person who interviewed you, including the administrative staff who greeted you.

See pgs. 40-41 for samples of the correspondence types listed above.

Please note that due to the interest of time, it may not always be possible to send a formal letter. In some situations, it is suitable to send an email so that your message arrives promptly.

Cover Letter Format: Letter of Application

Date

Name of Contact Person
His/Her Title
Organization Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Contact Person (Mr./Ms. and last name):  
(If a contact name is not listed, call the organization to ask for the appropriate contact. If you cannot locate a specific individual, address your letter to Members of the Search committee or Human Resources Director)

Opening Paragraph
Use this paragraph to get the employer’s attention. Show your initiative, and what you have learned about the company that makes it attractive to you. Identify what position you are applying for and how you learned about the position. If you have been referred to the position by someone in your network, include that information here. Your goal is to convince the employer that you are a strong candidate qualified for an interview.

Body of the Letter
This section of the letter is where you justify why you should be considered as a candidate. Relate your qualifications to the specific job requirements, using examples of your experiences and achievements to convey your knowledge and skills. Do not simply duplicate the information your resume; rather highlight or add pertinent details of interest to the employer. Use wording similar to the job description and make a connection between your experiences and the duties/tasks of the position.

Closing Paragraph
The final paragraph is used to express an interest in an opportunity to interview for the position or to meet to discuss your qualifications. Indicate a willingness to supply the employer with additional information. Also, indicate that you will take the next step, which may be a follow-up phone call (be sure to mark your calendar and then make the call). If you wish, state that you will call within two weeks to ensure that your materials were received or to talk more about the position in detail. Remember to thank the employer for reviewing your application.

Sincerely,

Your Signature (use black ink)

Your typed name

Enclosure (if you are including a resume or another document with your cover letter)