

Job Search Professional Correspondence Guide

OVERVIEW

You've done all the hard work of writing a great résumé and cover letter. Now it's time to take the skills you developed for creating succinct and professional communications and apply them to all the ways you might be in touch with prospective employers. Throughout your internship or job application process there are numerous opportunities to communicate with organizations of interest. See below for summaries and examples of various steps in the process.

WRITING A COVER EMAIL

Many times when you apply to a position you need to attach a PDF of your cover letter and résumé to an email. Keep the body of this email short and sweet, referring to the attachments so the reader is sure not to mistake your email as your official cover letter. Even though it's short, this is still a professional communication, so make sure the tone is formal and the email is free from typos. Remove any automatic signatures like quotes, emojis, or witty sayings. Also, give the subject line some thought. Sometimes the job posting will give you instructions on what to include in the subject line so your application can effortlessly get to the correct hiring manager. If no instruction is given, include the word "Applicant" followed by your name and the position title of the opening.

Sample: Cover Email

Subject: Applicant Philander Chase Summer 2019 Policy Intern

Dear Ms. Smith,

Attached, please find my application materials for the Summer 2019 Policy Intern position. Thank you for the consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Philander Chase
Cell: 213-456-7890

CONNECTING AFTER YOU APPLY

You've sent in your cover letter and résumé and now what? If you submitted your application digitally or in-person, after a week you'll want to reach back out to the employer if you haven't yet heard from them. If you applied via land mail, wait two weeks. As recommended in the Career Development Office's Cover Letter Guide, ideally you had mentioned in your cover letter when you would be in touch. Be sure to follow up within the timeframe you stated. If you didn't include a date, you can still reach out. This step is one that many people miss, but it's important. It demonstrates your initiative and follow through. If the job posting says, "No phone calls, please" then keep this outreach to an email. (In cases when an employer requests no calls or emails then phoning or emailing isn't recommend.) If the employer hasn't instructed you to not follow up, then starting with a call shows you're not afraid to be proactive and interface with others on a more personable level. Even if you're a little nervous, begin with a call. Writing down what you aim to say ahead of time can help alleviate call anxiety.

Sample: Post-Application Call

If you are calling a main number instead of a direct line, ask to speak to the person to whom you addressed your cover letter. Be kind to anyone you speak with. Administrative assistants will usually tell their

supervisors how a call went if it stands out as particularly gracious and professional or demeaning and demanding. Be sure it's the former!

"Hello, I'm Philander Chase. I'm calling today to follow up on an application I submitted last week for the Summer 2019 Policy Intern position. I remain very interested in this opportunity, and I wanted to check in today to see where you might be in the hiring process, and if there are any preliminary questions about my application materials that I can answer for you."

Sample: Post-Application Email

Dear Ms. Smith,

I submitted my résumé and cover letter for the Summer 2019 Policy Intern opening on Thursday, October 11, 2018. As mentioned in my cover letter, I'm reaching out today to inquire about the status of my application and to see if we might have the opportunity to discuss my qualifications as they relate to the position. I remain very interested in working with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean this summer and I'd welcome the chance to speak further. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information as you consider my candidacy. Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,

Philander Chase
Cell: 213-456-7890

FOLLOWING UP AFTER AN INTERVIEW

Your résumé and cover letter caught an employer's attention and you had an interview. What comes next? Some companies have multiple stages of interviews--meaning you may do a phone or video interview before being invited onsite for an in-person one. After each interview, be sure to send a thank you note to everyone who interviewed you. These are usually brief correspondences that a) restate your interest and enthusiasm, b) reference something from the interview to demonstrate that you were engaged, c) recap your relevant skills and experience, and c) thank the interviewer. Best practice is to email within 24 hours and to write a handwritten note as well following a final interview. Doing so let's your interviewer promptly know that you are professional, and the handwritten note that follows reinforces your thoroughness. Missing the step of a thank-you note could mean the difference between landing the job and losing it!

Sample: Interview Follow-up Email

Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you for taking the time yesterday to meet with me to discuss the Summer 2019 Policy Intern position. I greatly enjoyed our conversation and I strongly believe that my training in Quito, Ecuador combined with supporting my college's Economics department chair, have prepared me well for the responsibilities you outlined. I appreciated our discussion about the importance of applying theory to real-world problem sets, and it would be an honor to support the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in this way. I'm eager to help advance your work on trade, international finance, and development through rigorous economic research and analysis, skills I've honed throughout my time at Kenyon and in the field.

I'm grateful to you for your consideration, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Philander Chase
Cell: 213-456-7890

Sample: Handwritten Thank-You Note

October 30, 2018

Dear Ms. Smith,

It was a pleasure to meet you yesterday and to learn more about the Summer 2019 Policy Intern position with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. The possibility of working with such a distinguished staff and organization is truly thrilling. I hope to have the opportunity to contribute to the Ecuador Rural Economies project that you highlighted, as I'd welcome the chance to share my Spanish and STATA skills, as well as my commitment to analytical problem solving and research. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Philander Chase

ACCEPTING AN OFFER

When offered a position that you have verbally accepted, it is good practice to send an email shortly after. In addition to establishing a written record of your acceptance, it also provides the opportunity to restate your understanding of key information related to the offer. You want to strike a tone of being appreciative and attentive to details. Find ways to include your job title, overview of main responsibilities, and compensation. For internships and temporary positions, also include work location, starting date, and work schedule. (For full-time positions post graduation, employers will generally send a letter of employment that confirms the terms of the offer that was agreed to. If this is sent immediately after you accept, then you don't need to send an email.)

Sample: Internship Position Acceptance

Dear Mr. Santiago,

Thank you for your call this afternoon. I very much look forward to joining you this summer in Portland, Oregon for the Social Media Intern position. I'm excited to work with you and the team at XYZ Communications as you launch a new social media campaign promoting local nonprofits that advance family services.

Per our conversation, I'll plan to start my internship on Monday, May 27, 2019 at 8:30 am. I have noted that my work schedule is Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-5:00 pm, completing my internship on Friday, August 16, 2018. I'll be sure to bring the proper identification you suggested to complete the I-9 form on my first day and to gain security clearance into the building.

I greatly appreciate the time you gave to considering my candidacy. I'm eager for summer to arrive.

Sincerely,
Koko

Koko Sing
Cell: 123-456-7890

Sample: Full-Time Position Acceptance

Dear Dr. Okeke,

It was a pleasure speaking with you this morning. I was delighted to be able to accept the Research Associate position with your lab at \$45,000/year. I'm very much looking forward to starting on June 3, 2019. If there is any human resources paperwork you'd like me to complete prior to my arrival, I'd be happy to do so.

As I mentioned during our call, I will be traveling for two weeks prior to my start date with limited email access. If you need to reach me during this window, please feel free to text me at 234-456-7890 and I will promptly reply.

Thank you again for this wonderful opportunity. I'm eager to join your team and help advance your important work.

Sincerely,
Grad

Grad Uate
Cell: 234-456-7890

WITHDRAWING AN APPLICATION

Throughout an internship and/or job search your submitted applications will be processed by organizations at varying paces. It's likely then that you might accept an offer while you still have other applications under review at several organizations. If this happens, you'll want to notify the other employers that you've interviewed with that you are no longer available. Taking this step signals that you respect an employer's time and it goes a long way toward maintaining a positive relationship, especially if you hope to reapply to the company at a future date.

Sample: Application Withdrawal

Dear Ms. Gita,

Thank you again for interviewing me for the Summer 2019 Marketing Analyst internship position. I'm writing today to notify you that I recently accepted an offer with another organization focused on similar objectives. Though I'm excited about the work before me, I was also equally eager to join your organization. I hope with another year of experience, I'll be an even more competitive candidate, as I hope to reapply to your program next year.

Again, I'm very grateful for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Koko Sing

DECLINING A POSITION

As you pursue multiple positions, it is possible that you may receive multiple offers and you will have to decline one or more. Always attempt to decline any offer via phone, speaking directly to the hiring manager. After this call, it is a professional courtesy to send an email restating your appreciation for their consideration. Again, this professional step will help keep doors open, should you decide to consider joining the organization in the future.

Sample: Position Decline

Dear Mr. Thomas,

Thank you for your time today on the phone. I was very sorry to have to decline your offer for the summer 2019 Editorial Assistant Internship position at 123 Press. The work your organization does to redefine the role of the independent publisher is impressive. I hope there will be an opportunity for our paths to cross in the future. I wish you all the best with this summer's work, and I appreciate the time you gave to considering my candidacy.

Sincerely,

Stu Dent

RESPONDING TO A REJECTION

It's possible that even if you make it to the interview stage, you may not ultimately get offered a position. In this case, you still want to wrap things up with the employer in a manner that speaks highly of your character and commitment to professional standards. Also, you never know if the selected candidate might back out, in which case you could be in the running again, so you want to keep your relationship with a prospective employer positive and cordial.

Sample: Rejection Follow-up

Dear Dr. Wong,

Thank you for notifying me of the Search Committee's final decision. Though I'm sorry to not have the opportunity to join you this summer at Top Publishing, I remain immensely impressed with your work and its impact in promoting diverse and contemporary authors.

I want to also thank you and your team for the time you put into my application review and interviews. It was a pleasure to meet you all.

I wish you the best in the important work that you'll be advancing this summer.

Sincerely,

Stu Dent

NOTIFYING CURRENT EMPLOYER ABOUT A JOB CHANGE

Once you land a position and are in it for awhile, you eventually may start to look for other work to advance your career. When you do accept a new offer, you'll need to speak with your current supervisor about your decision. Ideally you'll want to give at least two weeks' notice. However, in today's fast-paced world, at least a month is preferable, if possible, for full-time positions. After you speak with your boss about your decision, they may request a resignation letter or email that simply states your decision to leave your current position and your last day of employment. Letters of resignation are generally needed for Human Resources purposes to generate end-of-employment processes. However, it is also good idea to send an email to your supervisor that recaps what you discussed. This helps confirm both parties are on the same page with departure details. You also want to show appreciation for the opportunity the company has provided. Keeping things positive with your current employer means you're leaving on good terms and likely able to keep them as a resource in the field, as well as a possible future reference. How you end a job can affect

future job searches, as your professional reputation will be reinforced or challenged by how you treat all those in your network.

Sample: Job Change Confirmation

Dear Maria,

I wanted to thank you again for your time today and for your understanding regarding my recent acceptance of a new position. It was a difficult decision to leave 789 Studios. I've deeply valued your supervision over the past few years, and I've learned a great deal from from this extraordinary team.

As I prepare for my last day on [date], I wanted to assure you that I will meet with department collaborators to pass on all relevant materials and contacts related to my core projects. I will summarize these projects for your review by the end of next week. Per your request, I will also schedule the requisite exit interview with Human Resources, and handle all paperwork they require of me.

If you have any additional tasks you'd like me to add to my wrap-up list, please let me know. My goal is to make this transition as easy as possible for all involved.

It has been a pleasure to work at 780 Studios and I hope our paths will cross again.

Best,
Bet

Bet Terment
[Company Contact Info]