



*Demonstration of strong communication skills is essential in the job search. Your letters and email messages create the first impression of your skills and knowledge as a future business professional. Being able to effectively articulate that you understand the connection between your skills and an employer's requirements will make your messages stand out. Targeted, clear communication is the key to getting responses from employers and helping to get invited for an interview.*

# PREPARE...Professional Communication

## COVER LETTERS

A well-written, organized cover letter helps to introduce your resume and directs the reader to key areas of your experience and background that specifically pertain to the open position. It also demonstrates your writing skills, so be sure to have it reviewed and edited.

### To whom should I address my cover letter if I do not have a contact?

Whenever possible, address your letter to a specific individual within the organization who is responsible for the hiring decision. Check the organization's website for the appropriate person or call directly and ask a receptionist for the hiring contact's name. If your research does not produce a specific name, then address the letter to the company's "Recruiting Team."

### How long should my cover letter be?

Just like the resume, your cover letters should be no more than one page in length, ideally three succinct paragraphs.

### When should I send my cover letter?

Send a cover letter when requested or required or if you need to explain why your background would be a fit. Providing a cover letter when not required is an unnecessary opportunity for error.

### I am submitting an application via email. How should I attach my cover letter and resume?

If not specified by the employer, use the body of your cover letter as the body of your email and include your resume as an attachment. Make sure the file name you use for your resume is appropriate and informative. For example, use "Jane E. Doe\_Resume\_August\_2020", rather than "New Resume" or "Resume Revision4".

## Points to Remember

- Target your letter to match each employer or position.
- Match your skills with the skills of the position and give specific examples.
- Mention any referrals (family friend, alumni, co-worker) to the position or the company at the beginning of the letter.
- Have more than one person proofread your letter.

## EMAIL ETIQUETTE

You will need to communicate with an employer through email. When using email in your professional communication, keep these tips in mind:

- Include an appropriate subject line and greeting. Use titles, even if you know the individuals well, because your contact might forward your correspondence to others during the decision process.
- Identify who you are and why you are contacting them.
- Keep your email concise, using correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Include your contact information in your signature.

## LinkedIn Email

LinkedIn contacts are a resourceful way to connect professionally with alumni and other business-related acquaintances. Follow these guidelines for effective use of the LinkedIn email feature, and remember that the email is about asking for advice, not a job.

- Keep your LinkedIn email brief (one paragraph or less).
- Identify who you are – I am an Indiana University Kelley School of Business student.
- Explain what you want to accomplish and why you want to contact them.
- Ask about the possibility of setting up a time for a phone call or a meeting.

# COVER LETTER *example*

2121 South College Drive, #234  
Bloomington, IN 47408

March 4, 2020

Dear Recruiting Committee:

1

As an Indiana University Kelley School of Business junior majoring in Marketing and Corporate Innovation, I am applying for Ingersoll Rand's Marketing Internship position posted on Kelley Connect. This internship opportunity would allow me both to apply and hone my technical knowledge, analytical skills, and communication skills.

2

I understand that a successful marketing intern must have strong analytical and people skills, as well as an in-depth knowledge of the customer's perspective. My education and experience have helped me develop these necessary skills. Marketing experience as Assistant Manager at Green-Thumb Garden Supplies provided me hands-on experience with customers and gave me the opportunity to assist the owner in identifying, developing, and evaluating marketing strategies based on company objectives. My customer service record at Green-Thumb resulted in my being recognized as "Employee of the Month" five times.

In addition to my coursework and business experience, I am the Promotions Committee Chair for the Women in Business organization at Kelley. This position has further developed my marketing and interpersonal skills that I am able bring to the internship position at Ingersoll Rand.

3

This Marketing Intern position would allow me to combine my classroom learning and previous experience and apply my knowledge to the Ingersoll Rand environment. Interning with Ingersoll Rand will provide me valuable experience, and I would appreciate the opportunity for an interview. Please contact me at (812) 555-1212 or at [betharms@iu.edu](mailto:betharms@iu.edu).

Sincerely,

*Beth Armstrong*

1. **Who you are and what you are seeking**
2. **Strongest qualifications that match their needs**
3. **Expected next steps**

## PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION EXAMPLES

### Email Request for Informational Interview

Dear Mr. Zhang:

Mike Lavender, a career coach at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business Undergraduate Career Services Office, provided me your email and mentioned that you have been with Procter & Gamble for more than two decades. As a sophomore studying marketing at the Kelley Business School at Indiana University, I am sure your insight would be invaluable. Are you willing to share some of your insight into careers in the marketing industry, particularly with Procter & Gamble? If so, do you have 15 to 20 minutes available for a face-to-face informational meeting to help me learn more about your career? Thank you for considering meeting with me, and I look forward to your advice.

Sincerely,  
Julianne Gabrielle

### LinkedIn Request for Informational Interview/Inmail Request

Hello, Mr. Smith:

You are a contact of my former employer, James Salt. As a junior at the Indiana University Kelley School of Business interested in a career in the finance industry, I would like to learn more about your career path.

Are you available to exchange emails or to speak with me on the phone to discuss your professional experiences? I look forward to your reply.

Robert Matthews  
[rmatthews@indiana.edu](mailto:rmatthews@indiana.edu)  
(812) 555-1374

*Thank-you messages are a must. Why? In addition to being a polite way to acknowledge the time spent with you, thank-you messages are another opportunity to sell yourself. By writing a thank-you note, you not only keep yourself at the forefront of the interviewer's mind, but it also allows you to continue to market yourself. Further, it is a way to stand out from other candidates.*

## THANK-YOU MESSAGES

A thank you can be in the form of a formal letter or thank-you card sent through the mail or via email. Each type of thank you acknowledgement sets a specific tone, so evaluate your situation before opting to use a specific type of thank you. The rule of thumb is, if you and the employer have communicated by email as part of your interview process, an email thank-you note is preferred. In addition, an email is quicker, whereas a card could take days to get through the multiple mail channels that larger companies often have.

### Thank-You Message Guidelines

- Start by reminding the individual of when the interview took place and for what position you interviewed.
  - Remember to thank the employer for his or her time in meeting with you.
  - Reiterate your interest in the position and specific details about the job that may have been mentioned by the employer. Tie your qualifications to that particular position and mention anything you feel sets you apart from the next candidate.
  - Reiterate your interest in future communication or follow-up. Express confidence by using, for example, the phrase "I look forward to hearing from you soon," rather than, "I hope to hear from you soon."
- Timeliness is everything. Send thank you messages within 24-48 hours of the interview.
  - Always send a thank-you message to individuals with whom you have interviewed. Also, send one to individuals who provided you with information about careers, referrals, or other assistance in your career search. Acknowledge your appreciation and gratitude for their efforts. It leaves a favorable impression in their minds and facilitates continued growth and development of those relationships.
  - If more than one person interviewed you, send a thank-you message to each individual with whom you interviewed. All messages may be added to your candidate file, so ensure you personalize each message.
  - To personalize your messages, highlight the points discussed with that individual. Not only does it refresh the interviewer's memory of you and the interview, but it also demonstrates your listening skills.
  - Keep it brief; no more than one-half to one page, two to three paragraphs.
  - In most cases, employers prefer thank-you emails to letters. Supplemental handwritten letters are optional. If you decide to write a handwritten letter, it should be mailed to the employer's local office.

### Thank-You Message Tips



# THANK-YOU MESSAGES

### Thank-You Message Example

Dear Mr. Flanton:

Thank you for the time you spent with me discussing the Investment Banking position this past Thursday. My interest in the position has grown after our in-depth conversation regarding the structure of the Public Finance team and the continued professional development that employees receive. I am confident that my education at the Kelley Business School and my internship experiences with Holbrook and Company and Citigroup prepared me well for a full-time position with Wells Fargo. I look forward to hearing from you about the next steps in the interview process.

Sincerely,  
Jerome Janson

### Follow-up to Interview Example

Dear Ms. Blackstone:

The Internal Audit position for which I interviewed two weeks ago is one in which I remain highly interested and excited. I am following up on your timeframe for making the hiring decision.

Based on our discussion at the end of the interview, I was hoping to hear a decision last Friday. I remain convinced that my accounting coursework and experiences as an Audit Intern with KPMG will help me contribute immediately to Motorola's auditing needs. Thank you again for considering my qualifications as you make your hiring decision.

Sincerely,  
Mark Goldstein