Reference Example

Carlos Montgomery
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REFERENCES

Jane Doe
Director, Community Engagment
American Cancer Society
950 Gentian Rd #11
Eagan, MN 55121
612-555-5555
jdoe@cancer.org
Relationship: Direct supervisor for two years

> **Repeat this process when listing other references**

Thank You Notes

After you interview for a job or internship, **send a thank you note to your interviewer(s) within two days**. Send either a handwritten note card, an email, or a typed letter (printed out and mailed). Email is a good choice if your interviewer prefers email contact, or if you know a hiring decision will be made immediately.

> **Many applicants don't send a thank you note. If you do, you'll stand out from the crowd and improve your chances of landing the position.**

- Proofread, then proofread again. Check for typos, grammatical errors, and awkward sentences.
- If you were interviewed by multiple people, the best thing to do is send an individual thank you to each person who interviewed you. At a minimum, send a thank you to whoever seemed to be the lead in the interview.
- Keep track of who you send thank you notes to and when. Keep a copy of emails and letters.

> **Document all parts of your job search—job descriptions, résumés, when you sent them, where you sent them, when you interviewed, to help you stay organized.**

Sample thank you note:

Hello Elaine Blackstone,

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you about the Marketing Assistant position, and for the tour of your wonderful new store. I would be excited to use my marketing and retail experience, and my creativity, to help develop effective marketing campaigns. I would look forward to helping Hipster Clothing become an industry leader. The fast-paced energy and collaborative environment is exactly the type of culture in which I thrive. Please contact me at 123-456-7890 or email@umn.edu if you need any additional information.

Thank you again for your time,

Carlos Montgomery

Cover Letters, References, and Thank You Notes — UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | CROOKSTON

Professional Communication and Emails

When you engage in a job search, and even in exploratory activities, it is very important to ensure that all of your communication is professional in nature. You want to present yourself in the best possible manner to a potential employer, even if you aren't actively applying for a job.

Email guidelines
Even brief emails should be more formal than you would send to a friend. Proper capitalization and spelling are critical. Ensure that you are always including a subject line, a greeting, and a closing.

Sample professional email

Subject: Information Request - Internship

Hello Adam,

I received your contact information from Jane Doe, a professor at the University of Minnesota. I know that many students from the U of M have volunteered as court monitors at WATCH MN, and I would like to get involved in a similar way. I see you have volunteer opportunities. When is the next training for volunteers scheduled?

Best,
Ellen Rogers

Cover Letters

Use your cover letter to succinctly present your qualifications, personality, and enthusiasm for the position. ALWAYS send a cover letter along with your résumé, whether it's required or not, unless specifically told not to do so.

Tailor your cover letter to the position—don't use one generic cover letter for everything. In most cases, your cover letter is the first extension of your personality an employer will see. Your cover letter should work with your résumé, NOT simply restate the information.

> **On average, you'll have 20 seconds to impress the employer with your letter. Therefore it's essential to write well.**

> **Use either a standard business letter format for your contact information (as seen below) or use the same heading as your résumé so your materials look consistent.**

Why write a cover letter?

- Serves as a writing sample and example of your communication skills
- Conveys motivation and interest in the position and/or organization
- Provides opportunity to describe aspects of your experience or identity more fully
- Helps prepare for interviews by developing relevant stories and examples to share
- Directly addresses any potential barriers (ex. Gaps in employment, relocation, and being unavailable during certain phases of the hiring process)

Cover Letter Format
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Carlos Montgomery
412 22nd Avenue S.,
Minneapolis, MN
612-555-5555
email@umn.edu

Current Date

Contact's Name
Contact's Job Title
Organization Name
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear [First Name and Last Name], (or Dear Hiring Manager if name not known)

First paragraph
- Offer a brief statement about your interest in the position or the organization
- Share how you heard about the position (if someone referred it to you)

Middle paragraph(s)
- Explain how your experience is a match for what they are seeking
- Demonstrate evidence that you know a bit about the employer and their needs, based on the job description. Show that you know the industry through how you write the letter (Ex. degree of creativity or formality you show in your writing)
- Promote your top three skills, experiences, or qualities that make you a strong candidate for the position
- Stay focused but offer a bit more detail than your résumé shows
- Describe how you would contribute to their mission or purpose through the position

Closing paragraph
- End in a positive and courteous tone
- Thank the reader for their time and consideration
- Use a professional closing, and sign with your name
- Insert an electronic version of your signature or sign the letter with a black ink pen

How to submit:
- Save each file with your name and document type. Ex.: "Eagle,Regal_CoverLetter.pdf"
- When submitting your application materials via email:
- Save each document as a separate PDF file, attaching them to the email
  - In the body of the email provide a brief, friendly, and somewhat formal and professional message, adhering to all the basics of good email communications (see previous tips)
  - Be sure to use a helpful subject line for your email message, such as:
    - "POSITION NAME application - FIRST AND LAST NAME" or
    - "Public Policy Intern application – Regal Eagle"

> **Referrals are one of the top ways people get invited to interview so it is good to share any connections you have, provided the person is comfortable with you using their name.**

Avoid these common cover letter mistakes
- Ignoring directions from the employer. Carefully read the job description and follow the guidelines provided by the employer
- Exceeding one page
- Submitting a cover letter with grammar or spelling errors
- Overuse of "I" statements
- Using language that undermines your confidence: Say "I will be a great asset" NOT "I believe I would be a great asset"
- Making it all about you: While the position may benefit you in exciting ways, remember to also share how you will contribute to the employer too
- Using clichés, such as the phrase, "As you can see on my résumé"

References
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You may be asked to provide 3-4 professional references before receiving a job offer. You may choose to ask:
- Former or current supervisors at jobs or internships
- Co-workers
- Professors/teachers or staff (advisors)
- Committee or student organization members with whom you have served

Do	Don't
Ask someone to serve as a reference in person, so they can ask any questions and you can gauge their reaction	Choose someone who can't give you a strong recommendation; if they can't or seem hesitant, find someone else
Talk with your references in advance, and have your references list ready when you begin applying for positions	Send information until it has been requested
Make sure to inform your references BEFORE you apply so they are prepared for a call/email	
Send a copy of the job posting and your résumé to your references, so that they can highlight aspects of your history that make you a great fit for the position	

> **Have your reference list available. If you're asked for your references during the interview, you're prepared to provide them.**

What to include in your reference list
1. List your contact information at the top of your reference page, as on your résumé.
2. Page title ("References") - This should be formatted to match your résumé.
3. References
   - a. Name
   - b. Title
   - c. Organization
   - d. Phone
   - e. Email
   - f. Describe the length and nature of the relationship