



SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR COLLEGE OF LAW
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

CAREER SERVICES OFFICE

Sample Employment Letters

SAMPLE FORM COVER LETTER

Your Address
City and State

Date

Contact Name
Firm Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear (always use Ms. or Mr. Smith – not Brenda Smith):

First Paragraph: The first paragraph introduces you to the reader and explains why you are writing. It should catch the reader's attention and make them want to read the rest of the letter. If you are responding to an advertisement, say so. If you have been referred to an employer by someone, say "_____ recommended that I contact you." If you are writing an alumni, point out your common bond up front and state why you are contacting him or her. If you are writing to an employer you became interested in through research, you could open with a reference to what you found. Then describe yourself ("I am a third-year student at Arizona State University College of Law with a strong interest in the cutting edge patent law that is your firm's specialty.")

Second Paragraph: The second paragraph establishes your value to the employer. Show the employer how your past experiences have prepared you to do great work for them. To be effective, you must have done research so that you are familiar with the employer's areas of practice, client base, and other relevant factors. Your letter should demonstrate to the employer that you are familiar with their needs and illustrate how your school and work background make you a good fit. If you have a strong connection to the employer's geographic location, show this. For example, if you are applying to a criminal law firm, this would be the place to highlight specific criminal law courses you've taken or the fact that you worked as an investigator for a public defender prior to law school. Be careful not to simply repeat your resume. Focus on those items on your resume that establish how your transferable skills will be of use to this employer.

Third Paragraph: The third paragraph states what you want to happen next. Let the employer know you are available for an interview at their convenience. If you are writing to an out-of-town employer, indicate when you will next be in the area.

Sincerely,

Signature

(BE SURE TO SIGN ALL YOUR LETTERS)

Sample 1

123 Main Street
Tempe, AZ 85282

December 12, 200-

Richard Jones, Esq.
Steel Hector & Davis
200 South Biscayne Boulevard
Miami, FL 33131

Re: Law Clerk Position

Dear Mr. Jones:

Enclosed please find my resume, writing sample and law school transcript as application for a summer clerkship with Steel Hector & Davis.

During my first year of law school, I received honors for my moot court brief and was selected to be a legal writing tutor in the spring. I possess strong research and writing skills and hope to utilize these skills to benefit Steel Hector & Davis at the same time I'm gaining exposure to different areas of the law. Steel Hector & Davis' varied practice appeals to me, and I believe that a clerkship with your firm would provide me the ideal opportunity to assist the firm while learning and improving my skills.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss my qualifications. I can be reached at (602) 123-4567.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

(Written signature)

John Smith

Enclosure

Sample 2

**5334 West Indian School Road
Phoenix, AZ 85043
(602) 555-5555
rbaker@asu.edu**

August 23, 200-

Ms. Denise Jones
Center for Law in the Public Interest
One East Camelback, Suite 1300
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Dear Ms. Jones:

Your advertisement for a summer legal intern in the December issue of the Arizona Bar Journal is of great interest to me. I am a second-year student at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University and intend to pursue a public interest practice.

As my enclosed resume illustrates, I have a strong background in the areas of employment discrimination and civil rights. This year I am representing the plaintiff in a gender-based employment discrimination claim in the College of Law Sexual Discrimination Clinic. Last summer, I worked with the Los Angeles public interest firm of Dobrovir & Knoll which specializes in civil liberties, equal employment, and government corruption cases. These experiences have strengthened my research, writing, and client counseling skills and have given me valuable experience in employment and civil liberties law. I believe that my record reflects my commitment to public interest work and has prepared me to make a substantial contribution to the Center.

I am available for an interview at any time and can be contacted at the above address, phone number, and email address. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

(Written signature)

Ryan Baker

Enclosure

Sample 3 – Applying Out of Area

**3842 West Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85033
(602) 555-5555
Erin.Scott@asu.edu**

August 23, 200-

Mr. Jonathan Wilson
Olson & Wilson
1045 Pomerado Road
San Diego, CA 92131

Dear Mr. Wilson:

John Watson recommended I contact you regarding employment opportunities with your firm. I am a third year student at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University, however, I plan to return home to California upon graduation. Olson & Wilson's extensive tax practice is particularly interesting to me.

My financial and accounting background would allow me to make an immediate contribution to your tax department. Prior to entering law school, I worked as a certified public accountant with Coopers & Lybrand. In this position, I gained familiarity with financial statement analysis, accounting standards, and tax laws. I have expanded this base of knowledge in law school by completing four tax courses. In addition, my work with Kotter & Smith, a Phoenix law firm specializing in tax law, has provided me with the opportunity to interview clients, research and draft memoranda regarding tax issues, and attend meetings with IRS staff. I believe that this combination of skills and experience would make me an asset to your firm.

I have enclosed my resume for your consideration. I will be in San Diego from March 10 through March 15, and would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you. I will contact you next week to see if a meeting can be arranged at your convenience.

Sincerely,

(Written signature)

Erin Scott

Enclosure

Requesting A Networking Appointment: A Sample Script or Letter

The following guide outlines a model request for a networking appointment. A letter such as the one prepared here may be sent when you cannot make a direct telephone call. Try to keep your conversation or letter brief so that you may carry out the majority of your networking interview in person.

1619 Five Mile Court, #12
Phoenix, AZ 85007
480-555-5808
Jane.Doe@asu.edu

September, 13, 200-

Eliza Elliot
Heath, Rogers & Associates
2000 South Hill Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016

Dear Ms. Elliot:

During a recent conversation with our mutual friend, Jane Jenson, of the Smith & Smith law firm, she suggested that it would be helpful for me to speak with you.

I am currently exploring new career opportunities (a summer position; a permanent associate position). Jane (or Ms. Jenson) did not suggest that you know of any specific job openings or that I would be fortunate enough to find anything appropriate in your organization, but she did say that a person in your position (that you are the kind of person who) would consider spending a short time with me and that your advice would be valuable.

At this point, I frankly do not know the exact title of my next position (which organization would be able to best utilize my legal skills). But I am certain of what I have to offer and the abilities I will bring to that job. My current problem is in understanding how I might match my abilities with the needs of an organization in a field such as yours with which I am not sufficiently familiar.

That is how Jane (or Ms. Jenson) thinks (believes) you can be helpful to me: by chatting with me briefly at your office at a time which will be convenient to you. I will very much appreciate this opportunity to speak with you and will call your office to see when it might fit into your calendar.

Sincerely yours,

(Written signature)

Jane Doe

TIPS ON FOLLOW-UP/THANK YOU LETTERS

This letter is the most important - yet one of the least used tools in a job search. It is used to establish goodwill, to express appreciation, and/or to strengthen your candidacy. The basic rule of thumb is that everyone who helps you in any way needs to receive a thank-you letter. When used to follow up on employment interviews, thank-you letters should be addressed to the same person you sent an application to as well as to your interviewers. Also, be sure to send thank-you letters to your contacts who granted you informational interviews and to people who served as your references. Make your letters warm and personal and use them as an opportunity to reemphasize your strongest qualifications; reiterate your interest in a position; provide supplemental information not previously given; draw attention to the good match between your qualifications and the job requirements; and/or express your sincere appreciation.

- Every interview, whether informational or a job interview, should be followed immediately (within 24 hours) by a personal letter. It is a common courtesy to thank someone who gives you time and attention.
- It reminds the potential employer of you, your skills, your enthusiasm. The employer may need to be reminded for two reasons: 1) It is very difficult for an interviewer to remember each candidate in detail after speaking with the pool of 15 to 20 (or more) individuals in a day, and 2) If this is an office visit, you may be forgotten in the vast array of activities he or she attended to that day.
- The letter is an opportunity to again present pertinent or helpful information about yourself that you may have omitted from oversight, lack of time, etc.
- It can be used to correct any misunderstandings or other unfortunate circumstances which occurred during your interview.
- Your letter can tactfully remind an employer of any promises made to you such as a second interview, interviews with others in the organization, future interest in assisting you, etc.
- It may serve to further a networking contact or professional relationship between the two of you which may help you later in your job campaign, or even after you are employed. And, since success in the working world is often predicated on people contacts, you may find yourself assisting the other person at some point in the near future.

SAMPLE THANK YOU/FOLLOW UP LETTER

Return Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number (Optional)
Email (Optional)

Date

Name of interviewer
Inside address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Ms. Smith:

(Paragraph 1) Remind the interviewer of the position for which you were interviewed, as well as the date and place of the interview. It is always courteous to express your thanks and/or appreciation.

(Paragraph 2) Confirm your interest in the opening and in the organization. Highlight your qualifications and slant them toward the various points that the interviewer considered important for the job. If you have done anything since the interview which demonstrates your interest in the position, such as talks with alumni, faculty, research with people or in the library, etc., be sure to mention it.

(Paragraph 3) Include any information not presented before to supplement your resume, application letter, and the interview. You may have completed a research paper or project, or perhaps you have received some kind of recognition. If travel, location, or a similar subject was stressed during the interview, be sure to confirm your willingness to comply with these conditions.

(Paragraph 4) Close with a suggestion for further action, such as a desire to visit the employer's place of business or to have additional interviews at a mutually agreeable place and time. It often helps to end the letter with a request for a prompt response.

Very truly yours,

(Your signature)

Full name, typed

THANK YOU/FOLLOW UP LETTER

2345 Mullan Road
Phoenix, AZ 85003
480-555-1234
John.Q.Student@asu.edu

October 29, 200-

Ms. Carol Young
Piper, Hamilton & Young
3535 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20056

Dear Ms. Young:

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me last Friday, October 27. I enjoyed meeting with you to discuss the summer associate program at your firm. Please extend my appreciation to Harold Piper and Mary Smith, with whom I also met that day and to Carl Jones for talking to me during my on-campus interview with your firm.

I am enthusiastic about the possibility of a summer position with Piper, Hamilton & Young because of my strong interest in international law. I enjoyed discussing international trade issues with you and was interested to learn about your work with several Japanese companies. I believe that I possess the research and writing skills that you are seeking in a summer associate and feel that I would be an asset to your program.

If I may provide you with any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(Written signature)

John Q. Student

ACCEPTANCE LETTER

Use this letter to accept a job offer and to confirm the terms of your employment (salary, starting date, medical insurance, etc.). Most often, an acceptance letter follows a telephone conversation during which the details of the offer and the terms of employment are discussed. The letter confirms your acceptance of the offer, expresses your appreciation for the opportunity, and positively reinforces the employer's decision to hire you.

507 Shore Drive
Hampton, VA 23501
480-555-1234
Email

April 20, 200-

name of contact & title
company or firm name
company or firm address

Dear _____:

I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your employment offer of April 16, and to tell you how delighted I am to be joining _____. The work is exactly what I have prepared for and hoped to do. I feel confident that I can make a significant contribution to the firm and am grateful for the opportunity you have given me.

As we discussed, I will report to work after the Bar exam on _____. Additionally, I shall complete all employment and insurance forms for the new employee orientation on May 22.

I look forward to working with you and your fine firm. I appreciate your confidence in me and am very happy to be joining your staff.

Sincerely,

(Written signature)

Suzanne Q. Chapstick

WITHDRAWAL LETTER

Once you accept a position, you have an ethical obligation to inform all other employers with whom you are negotiating that you have been offered a position and to withdraw your employment application from consideration. Your withdrawal letter should express appreciation for the employer's consideration and courtesy. It may be appropriate to state that your decision to go with another organization was based on having better person-job fit for this stage in your career. Do not say that you obtained a better job.

4621 Chester Lane
Virginia Beach, VA 23466
480-555-1234
Email

April 20, 200-

Name of contact & Title
Company or Firm Name
Company or Firm Address

Dear _____:

I am writing to inform you that I am withdrawing my application for the associate position with your firm. As I indicated in my interview with you, I have been exploring several employment possibilities. This week I was offered an associate position with a local firm and, after careful consideration, I decided to accept it. The position provides a very good match for my interests at this point in my career.

I want to thank you very much for interviewing and considering me for your position. I enjoyed meeting you and learning about the innovative programs you are planning. _____ is an outstanding firm, and I wish you and your staff well.

Sincerely,

(Written signature)

Heather Ferguson

REJECTION LETTER

Employers are not the only ones to send rejection letters. Candidates may have to decline employment offers that do not fit their career objectives and interests. Rejecting an employment offer should be done thoughtfully. Indicate that you have carefully considered the offer and have decided not to accept it. Also, be sure to thank the employer for the offer and for consideration of you as a candidate.

206 Bruce Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23466
480-555-1234
Email

April 20, 200-

Mr. Carl Santos
Santos & Santos
1700 Colonial Parkway
Williamsburg, VA 23176

Dear Mr. Santos:

Thank you very much for offering me the position of associate with your firm. I appreciate your discussing the details of the position with me and giving me time to consider your offer.

I enjoyed the time I spent and the members of your firm that I met. There are many aspects of the position which are very appealing to me. However, I believe it is in our mutual best interest that I decline your kind offer. This has been a difficult decision for me, but I believe it is the appropriate one for my career at this time.

I want to thank you for the consideration and courtesy given to me. It was a pleasure meeting you and your fine staff.

Sincerely,

(Written signature)

Jean Smith