

Network to Work Meeting

Resource Materials – November 2017

FOLLOW UP – JOB INTERVIEW

Pointers – Following Up on a Job Interview

Following up on an interview is a critical part of the job search process. Three career coaches and consultants in New York offer this advice about the most effective way to do it.

1. Send an Email, not a handwritten note.

Some people think a handwritten note will make them stand out from the crowd. The coaches disagree. “It will make you look like a dinosaur.”

2. Sooner is better than later.

If you’re competing with another equally qualified candidate, and she beats you to the follow-up-note punch, you’ll have put yourself at a disadvantage. Do write as soon as possible. The coaches all recommend doing so within 48 hours.

3. Late is better than never.

We all drop the ball sometimes. If you’ve missed the 48-hour deadline, write anyway.

4. Consider sending a second, more substantial note.

It makes sense to send a quick, enthusiastic thank you right after the interview – with a promise that you’ll soon send along a more substantial note.

5. Focus on the Interviewer.

In your e-mail, make it clear that you listened to the interviewer’s needs and concerns and that you’re prepared to address them.

6. Talk about how you can add value and solve problems.

Write your note as if you were a consultant for the company where you want to work.

7. Even if you blew the interview, do follow up.

Acknowledge any gaffes. You could say, “I felt I didn’t represent myself in the best possible light.” At the least, you want the hiring manager to become a networking contact.

8. If you don't hear back, pick up the phone.

Use a three-strikes policy: two e-mails followed by a phone call if you haven't gotten any response.

9. Proofread carefully.

One of the most common mistakes job-seekers make is sending a follow-up email with typos. Ask a friend to proofread your note, and/or slowly read it aloud yourself. **Pay particularly close attention to the spelling of people's names.**

10. If you're upset, give yourself time to cool off.

Job seeking is an emotional process, and it's upsetting when you don't hear from a potential employer. But if you're feeling angry, don't try to write an email. Give yourself a day to calm down.

Adapted from "How to Follow Up on a Job Interview" from Forbes magazine, 2017.

<https://www.forbes.com/pictures/fmlm45eegf/how-to-follow-up-after-a-job-interview/#7c06e1e546c1>

How to Follow Up by Email after an Interview

In general, there are three kinds of follow-up emails you can send after an interview. In the best case, you only need to send one email — a note that thanks your interviewers for their time and expresses your enthusiasm for the job. This note should be sent within 24 hours. Its message should be straight forward and clear, and don't be shy. Tell them you're excited to hear back and wanted to check if there's an update or decision yet.

Sometimes, weeks can pass after an interview without a response from a potential employer. If this happens, you can send a second follow-up email to check in.

Finally, if you feel comfortable doing this, you can also send an email asking to stay in touch with the hiring manager. If you didn't get the job, this is a great way to expand your network and learn how to improve your chances the next time.

A. Subject Lines:

The follow up email subject line is very important. It decides whether your email gets opened and how fast. Ideally you should follow up with whoever told you they would "be in touch". Conversely, you may follow up with whoever you'd been talking to for scheduling of the interview, etc.

The best subject line, and the one that will get opened fastest, is one which is a simple reply to the latest email exchange you had with the person in question. **It will look something like this:** "Re: Interview on Thursday at 10 AM". It will be opened immediately because it'll appear as part of the previous conversation. Ideally you will be remembered right away, even if a bit of time has passed. Also, the email has no chance of being mistaken for spam.

You don't always have an existing email to reply to, so sometimes you'll have to write your own email subject line. **Here are 8 great subject lines to choose from when following up after an interview:**

- Thanks for your time today
- Excited for what's next
- Excited about what I learned today
- Really enjoyed our discussion today
- A quick note on our conversation earlier
- Appreciate your time and advice
- Thanks for your time, and one follow up question (this works if you have a question you'd like to ask, along with thanking them)
- Great speaking with you today

The more specific you can get in your follow up email subject lines, the better, so try adding details.

You can mention the exact job title or something specific discussed in the interview. You can include other details too, it depends on the situation and the person you're following up with. Don't make your subject line too long, but a bit of information is good and it's okay if it's around 10 words long.

B. "Thank You" email content: the body of your thank you email

Start with the name of the person who interviewed you. Use their first name if you are on a first-name basis. If not, include "Mr./Ms." and their last name.

In your follow up thank you email, highlight the ways your talents match up to the role. Use words that will resonate with the hiring manager. You can find these in the job description and in the notes you made for yourself during and after the interview. If there's something you forgot to say or want to elaborate on from your interview, this email is a great place to mention it.

It's best to pick a specific topic you discussed with the person for your email, instead of just saying you enjoyed talking about the overall job. It'll remind them of the conversation you had and show you were paying attention.

If you interviewed with multiple people in the company, they might compare emails so send something slightly different to each person.

In most interviews, you'll talk about a lot of topics with each person you speak to. Don't get overwhelmed when following up. Just pick one and mention it. Something that stood out or seemed interesting that they'd remember discussing with you. And choose something related to the other person's area of focus. If you interviewed with the Training Manager, you want to stroke their ego by writing about something training-related.

Don't forget to communicate your enthusiasm for the job by restating your interest and your feeling that you are the right fit for the position.

General Content:

- In the first paragraph, mention the specific job title and thank your interviewer.
- In the second paragraph, note the company's name as well as a conversation point and/or goal that seemed especially important to the person you spoke with. Connect that point to your experience and interests.
- In the final paragraph, invite them to ask you any additional questions and close by saying you're looking forward to hearing back.

Here are some examples:

"Subject line: Thank you for your time

Dear [Interviewer's name],

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about the (job title) role. It was great to meet with you and learn more about the position.

I'm very excited about the opportunity to join [Company name], and am particularly interested in the details you shared about _____. I'm enthusiastic about the prospect of _____ and bringing my experience in successfully _____ to your organization.

After our conversation, I'm confident that my background in _____ and my interest in _____ will enable me to fill the job requirements effectively and support the vision of [Company name]. Please feel free to contact me if I can provide you with any further information or samples of my work. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks again,

[Your name]

P: 555-555-5555

E: youremail@email.com"

OR

"Hi _____,

I wanted to take a second to thank you for your time earlier today. I enjoyed our conversation about _____ (specific topic), and the (job title) position sounds like an exciting opportunity for me at this point in my career. I'm looking forward to hearing any updates you can share, and don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns."

C. "Checking In" email content: the body of your Checking In email sent after sending your thank you email

If you haven't heard back from a potential employer after your interview and after your thank you follow up, you can send a "checking in" email, ideally to the recruiter. You should send this email if you haven't heard back after two weeks since your interview.

You don't need to worry that checking in makes you seem desperate or annoying. The truth is that these decisions take a different amount of time at each company. You're simply giving them a gentle nudge for an update. And, if you really want the job, there's no harm in reiterating that.

What should you say in your follow up email?

- Say you're following up because there haven't been any updates regarding the job you interviewed for (e specific – mention the job title, the date you interviewed, or both).
- Reaffirm that you're still interested in the position and excited about what you learned in the interview, and that you're eager to hear about next steps.
- And then ask for more information. Tell them any updates they can provide would be great, and you're looking forward to hearing back.

Examples:

#1: "Hi _____,

I really enjoyed meeting you on (date) and wanted to emphasize just how excited I am about this opportunity. It was great to meet with the team and I'm looking forward to your update. Is there anything else I can forward along to make your hiring decision easier?

*Best,
(your name and phone)"*

OR

#2: "Hello _____,

I wanted to follow up in regard to the _____ position that we discussed on _____ (day). I'm excited about what I learned and wanted to check if there have been any updates on your end. Thanks for keeping me in the loop!"

OR

#3: "Hi _____,

I wanted to check in and see whether a decision had been made regarding the _____ position. I'm excited to hear feedback based on everything I learned in the interview. Let me know the latest when you have a chance. Thanks!"

OR

#4: "Dear [Recruiter's name],

I hope you're well! I'm checking in on the Marketing Coordinator role. It was great to meet with the team earlier and I'm looking forward to your update. Please let me know if there's anything else I can provide to assist in the decision-making process.

*Thank you,
[Your name]
P: 555-555-5555"*

What if the company says they don't have any news yet?

It's likely that the company may respond to your email and say they're still waiting for something to happen. Sometimes they'll be specific on what that 'something' is but usually not. A good practice is to respond with something to keep the conversation alive and give yourself an opening to follow up again if needed.

Here's an example:

"Thanks for the update. Do you have a sense of what the timing will look like moving forward? Or when would be an appropriate time for me to check back in? I'm excited about the opportunity, but I know these things take time so I don't want to follow up too often here."

C. Final Tips for Following Up

Make sure to end each interview by asking when you can expect to hear back from them. It'll save you some stress and you'll know whether it's time to follow up or not. Sometimes it's normal to wait 1-2 weeks for a response after your interview. Maybe you were the first person they spoke with and they have many interviews scheduled.

Remember to be direct and brief, stay polite, and be clear about what you're asking for so there's no confusion.

Adapted from:

"Following Up after Your Interview", by Biron Clark, 2016, from Career Sidekick, <https://careersidekick.com/follow-up-after-interview-no-response/>

"Follow-Up Email Examples for After the Interview" from Indeed.com; <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/follow-up-email-examples-after-interview>

"The Smart Way to Follow Up after an Interview when you Haven't Heard Back", by Richard Moy, The Muse, February 2, 2017, <http://www.businessinsider.com/the-smart-way-to-follow-up-after-an-interview-when-you-havent-heard-back-2017-1>