

# Professional Correspondence

Often the decision of whether or not to invite you to take the next step in a relationship with a potential employer, the interview, will be based entirely on one or two short documents. This leaves no room for less than perfect paperwork! The Career Management Center offers a [resume and cover letter professional seminar](#), live in person, live via the web and pre-recorded on-line or uploadable on your iPod.

## Resumes

Start with the step by step basics of [resume writing](#). Read literature about creating professional resumes, especially when/if you have multiple years of experience. Check out a sample of a [chronological](#) MPA resume sample.

## Cover Letters

[Cover letters](#) should be simple, clear, and to the point. Unlike resumes, they should reflect your personality. Read your letters aloud. Do you sound like a capable professional who is not only qualified, but also genuinely interested in the position? Do you sound confident, but not cocky? Likable?

## References

Ask 3 or 4 professionals to be your references. Using the same header as on your resume, create a reference sheet that includes name, up to date contact information, including email address, and relationship to you. eg. former manager. Send this with your resume only if specifically asked, but always take a copy with you to interviews. One reference can be a professor, at least one should be a current or former direct supervisor, and one can be a co-worker. Make sure that they are prepared to give you an outstanding reference. Give each reference a copy of your resume so they can speak intelligently about your past experience as well as the quality of your work.

## Thank You Letters

Thank you letters should be sent after information interviews, job interviews, or any time that someone has offered you substantial assistance. They can take the form of an email, be printed on your business letterhead, or be hand written on a pre-printed thank you card. Be sure to keep the card professional, with a simple thank you on the front and blank inside. Thank the person for their time, insights, advice, contacts they gave you, etc. In the case of a job interview you can also reiterate your interest in the position and mention anything you forgot to say in the interview or want to make clear.