

Ace that post-interview thank-you note

Following up with a thank-you note after a job interview is an essential part of the job-search process. A good thank-you note can tip the scales in your favor. So how do you write a good thank-you note to your interviewer?

That's what one reader asked recently on the Admin Pro Forum:

"I'm a little uncertain about job interview etiquette—more specifically, what comes afterward. How long do I wait to send a thank-you email, and is that a good time to elaborate at length on how I feel about the job, or even try to correct some impression I may have accidentally given? How should I close such an email, and is it even necessary to send one if I'm no longer interested in being hired?"

—Kenny, unemployed admin.

We asked some experts to offer their take on the issue.

Send your thank-you note within 24 hours of your interview. Sending your thanks promptly shows that you're serious about the job, says Michella Chiu, a co-founder of career coaching center Prime Opt. If the company is looking to hire quickly, it's important to get your note to them before a decision is made.

Reiterate why you're a strong candidate. Consider your thank-you note a follow-up letter in which you can expand on, clarify or bring up a point that was missing from the interview, career coach Laurie Berenson says. "Approaching it simply as a thank-you-for-your-time-I-hope-to-hear-from-you message is missing an entire opportunity to pitch why you're a strong candidate for the position," she says. However, you should show that you value their time by keeping your note concise, with only three to four paragraphs.

Close with a positive statement. Remind them that you're excited about the position and you're looking forward to your next conversation with them.

Send a thank-you note even if you no longer want the job. Leave a good impression on people you meet professionally, because you never know when you'll cross paths again. "The world of recruiters and hiring managers is smaller than you think, and they are well connected to each other," Chiu says.