

CAREER & EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION CENTER

Professional Correspondence Guide



MOUNT ST. JOSEPH
UNIVERSITY

Professional correspondence
is communication between
two or more parties
through professional writing
of letters and emails.
Professional correspondence
reflects a person's
level of competency
and professionalism.




Table of Contents

General Rules for All Professional Correspondence.....	2
Cover Letter.....	2
Cover Letter Components and Content	3
Sample Cover Letter	4
Cover Letter Evaluation Checklist.....	5
Letter of Inquiry.....	5
Sample Letter of Inquiry	6
Electronic Correspondence.....	7
General Rules for Electronic Correspondence.....	7
Sample Cover Letter & Resume E-mail	7
Sample Resume Only E-mail	8
Interview Thank You.....	8
Sample Interview Thank You E-mail.....	9
Sample Interview Thank You Card	9
Acknowledgement of Offer	10
Sample Acknowledgement of Offer.....	10
Acceptance of Offer	11
Sample Acceptance of Offer.....	11
Declination of Offer	12
Sample Declination of Offer.....	12
Resignation Letter	13
Sample Resignation Letter	13

General Rules for All Professional Correspondence

- Appropriate fonts are Times New Roman, Helvetica, Arial, and Garamond. The font size should be 10 to 12 point in black ink.
- If sending hard copies of professional documents, print on white or ivory professional resume paper. Professional resume paper is available for purchase in the Career & Experiential Education Center and office supply stores.
- If a letter will accompany your resume, use the same font and paper to match your resume.
- Every correspondence sent to an employer should be original and tailored to the position and organization. Read the job description and highlight skills that match the position.
- Keep the content interesting, energetic, and active by using action verbs.
- Keep the content reader-centered rather than self-centered. Avoid repeated references to yourself as “I” or “my”. Instead, focus on the needs of the reader by referring to “you”, “your”, and “the company”. Communicate what you will do for them rather than what you want them to do for you.
- Include necessary contact information.
- Check and return emails and phone messages within 24-48 hours.



Proofread and spellcheck all professional correspondence thoroughly for errors.

Cover Letter

Your cover letter may be the most important aspect of your job search. After all, a cover letter is often the first contact you will have with a prospective employer. In general, keep in mind a cover letter should complement, not duplicate, your resume. Your cover letter should enhance and highlight the skills and experience on your resume.

PURPOSE

- To generate employer interest in interviewing you
- To emphasize how your skills match the job description
- To communicate how you will benefit the employer

FORMAT

- The letter should have an overall balanced look with margins being 1” to 1 ½”
- Use Block Format: content is aligned to the left-hand side of the page
- Paragraphs should be 3-5 sentences long
- Typically one page in length
- The heading (your name and contact information) can match the heading of your resume or be in standard letter format

Standard Letter Format

1234 Main Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

March 5, 2015

Ms. Samantha Smith
Director, Human Resources
Cincinnati Research Foundation
5678 Vine Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Ms. Smith:

Resume Format

Jason Jones
1234 Main Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 123-4567 • Jason.Jones@gmail.com

March 5, 2015

Ms. Samantha Smith
Director, Human Resources
Cincinnati Research Foundation
5678 Vine Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Ms. Smith:

Cover Letter Components and Content

Your Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Date (Month Date, Year)

Name of person
Title of person
Company name
Company street address
City, State Zip Code

Greeting, make every effort to include a person's name to address your letter. If you can't locate the person's name, address your letter to "Dear Sir/Madam," "Dear Hiring Manager," or "Dear Search Committee." Another option is to address your letter "To Whom it May Concern."

In the **first paragraph**, state why you are writing. When you are writing to apply for a position, indicate the position title and how you learned of the position. The next statement should grab the reader's attention and indicate why you are interested in the company/position. This is where research on the company should be used. It will show the employer that you've done your homework.

The **middle paragraph(s)** should emphasize your key accomplishments and skills to what the employer is seeking. Remember to avoid repeating your resume; rather enhance what is on your resume with more specific examples of your attributes related to the position requirements.

Start the **final paragraph** with a statement indicating how your skills and accomplishments will be of benefit to the employer in some way. Thank the reader for their time and consideration.

Closing, Select a professional closing to your letter, such as: Sincerely or Kind Regards. Allow three spaces between your closing and your name and four if you are signing. If you are signing your letter, use blue or black ink.

Signature

Your Name

Sample Cover Letter

1234 Main Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

March 5, 2015

Ms. Samantha Smith
Director, Human Resources
Cincinnati Research Foundation
5678 Vine Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the Clinical Research position at the Cincinnati Research Foundation as seen on the website. My education in psychology, research background, and proficiency in statistical programs demonstrates my motivation to pursue a career in clinical research and serve as an asset to your team. I am confident that my professional goals directly align with Cincinnati Research Organization's mission to provide innovative solutions to comprehensive questions utilizing a team approach.

My high level of dedication and excellent organizational skills allowed me to achieve a strong academic record at Mount St. Joseph University, reflecting my diligence and commitment to success. Rigorous liberal arts courses and a concentration in psychology provided me with strong writing abilities, as well as sharp analytical and problem-solving skills necessary for this position. My refined research skills gained through my Senior Honors Thesis project and Research I and II courses will allow me to effectively compile and analyze data, as well as write reports from in-depth research to prove a specific hypothesis within this Clinical Research position. Through work experience of completing reports, maintaining a database and managing files, I developed a strong sense of responsibility and effective interpersonal skills that will offer value to your team.

I am confident that my extensive background, work ethic, and positive attitude would make me an asset to Cincinnati Research Foundation. My enclosed resume will further outline my qualifications for the Clinical Research position. I look forward to an opportunity to discuss the position in detail with you in person. If you wish to arrange an interview, please contact me via email at jason.jones@gmail.com or by telephone at (513) 123-4567. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jason Jones

Cover Letter Evaluation Checklist

FORMAT

- Uses appropriate font, size, and ink
- All professional documents are consistent in font and paper type
- Page margins are appropriate and the letter has an overall balanced look
- Free of typos, spelling mistakes, and grammatical errors
- Formatted in a standard letter style using block format
- Includes an appropriate greeting and closing
- If signing, signature is in blue or black ink
- Typically one page in length

CONTENT

- Specifically tailored to the job description and organization
- Well-organized, clear, concise, and to the point
- Reader-centered rather than self-centered and keeps “I” and “my” to a minimum
- States your skills and your experience that will benefit the organization
- Contains complete sentences with strong action verbs
- Demonstrates energy and enthusiasm, while still being professional
- Includes your complete contact information (name, address, phone number, and email address)

Letter of Inquiry

Your letter of inquiry is an effective way to connect with an organization in which you are interested in seeking employment. Due to the unsolicited nature of the correspondence, it shows you are proactive and have a genuine interest in working there.

PURPOSE

- To inquire about possible positions with an organization
- To show a prospective employer you are interested in their organization
- To demonstrate how your skills and experience will be an asset to the organization
- Similar to the purpose of a cover letter, but not responding to a specific position

FORMAT

- Follow cover letter formatting

COMPONENTS & CONTENT

- Similar to a cover letter, but inquiring about available positions as opposed to a specific position

Sample Letter of Inquiry

Devon Davis
111 Madison Avenue
Covington, KY 41011
(513) 222-3333 • devon.davis@msj.edu

March 15, 2015

Dr. Harriet Hamilton
Superintendent
Cincinnati Public Schools
444 Vine Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Dr. Hamilton:

I am writing to inquire if you anticipate any elementary teaching vacancies in Fall 2016 for which I might be considered. Jane Harris, a former instructor in your district and currently my supervising teacher, recommended that I contact you. Cincinnati Public Schools' objectives of utilizing open classroom techniques and team teaching learning environments align with my teaching philosophy. I am confident that I am well prepared for a position within your team given my comprehensive educational and teaching background.

As an honor student, I will receive my Bachelor of Arts degree in Inclusive Early Childhood Education and my teaching license in May 2016. My student teaching assignments provided me with team teaching opportunities in both primary and upper grades. As an actively involved team member, I participated with three teachers to target students' needs in Math and English. We developed small group and individualized instruction centers to obtain clear objectives. As a result, weekly test scores showed an average increase of 10%.

As you can see from my enclosed resume, teaching has been part of my life since 2010, when I was employed as an instructional aide. I sincerely look forward to sharing my enthusiasm, specialized educational training, and professional experience with Cincinnati Public Schools. Should you foresee any positions for which I might be considered, please contact me at (859) 222-3333 or devon.davis@msj.edu. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards,

Devon Davis

Devon Davis

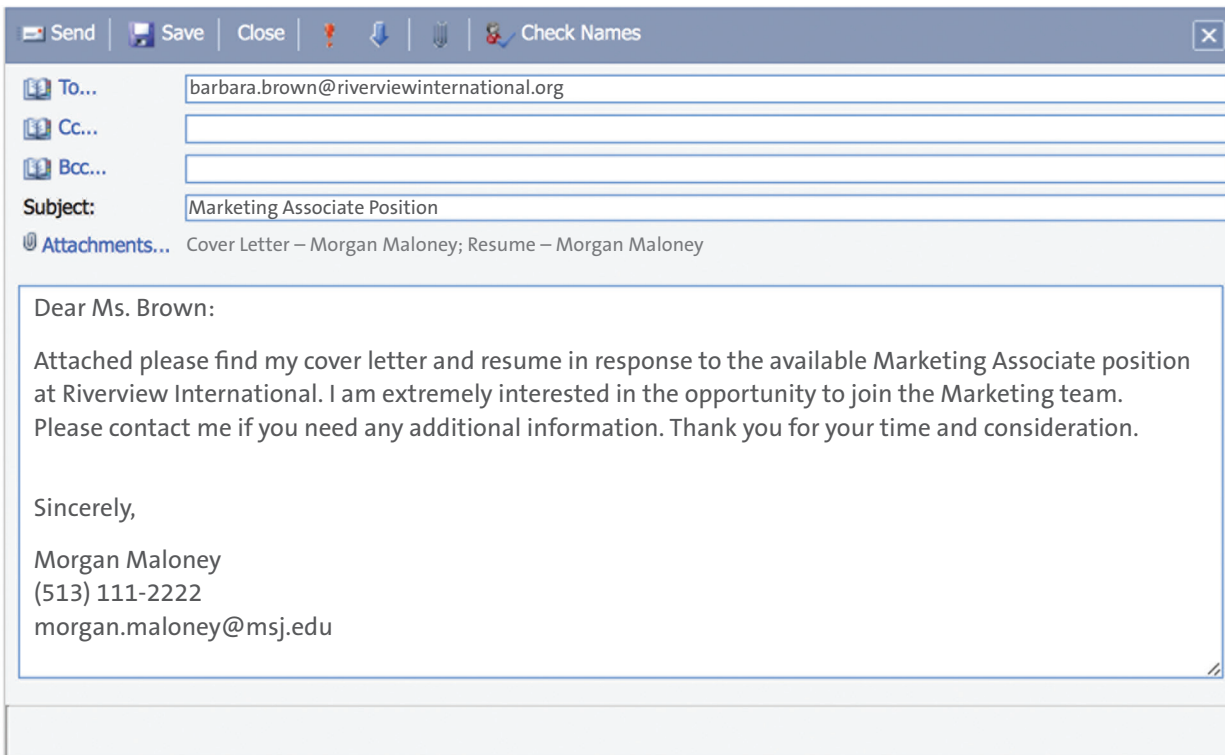
Electronic Correspondence

Electronic correspondence is becoming more common in today's professional environment. It is equally as important to communicate with others in a professional manner electronically, as it is written or spoken.

General Rules

- Your e-mail address, subject line, and content all have to be clear and appropriate. Failure to do so may result in your e-mail being ignored and/or deleted as junk or spam.
- Your MSJ email is acceptable and appropriate. Something such as footballstar@gmail.com or cutegirl@hotmail.com is not appropriate.
- Be sure to use an e-mail account that you check regularly.
- Make sure to include a greeting (ex: Dear Ms. Smith) and a standard closing (ex: "Sincerely").
- Leave a space in between paragraphs. Do NOT indent paragraphs.
- Do not include abbreviations (ex: lol, omg, and ASAP), emoticons (ex: ☺☹) or other shortcuts you may use in informal correspondence.
- All attached application materials (ex: resume and cover letter) should be saved and sent as PDF files.
- The file name(s) should be appropriate and include the type of document and your full name (ex: Cover Letter - Jane Smith).
- Only send application materials requested by the employer.
- All attachments should be referenced in the body of the email.
- After your closing, include your name, phone number, and email address.

Sample Cover Letter & Resume E-mail



The screenshot shows an email client window with a toolbar at the top containing icons for Send, Save, Close, and Check Names. The email fields are filled with the following information:

- To...:** barbara.brown@riverviewinternational.org
- Cc...:** (empty)
- Bcc...:** (empty)
- Subject:** Marketing Associate Position
- Attachments...:** Cover Letter – Morgan Maloney; Resume – Morgan Maloney

The body of the email contains the following text:

Dear Ms. Brown:

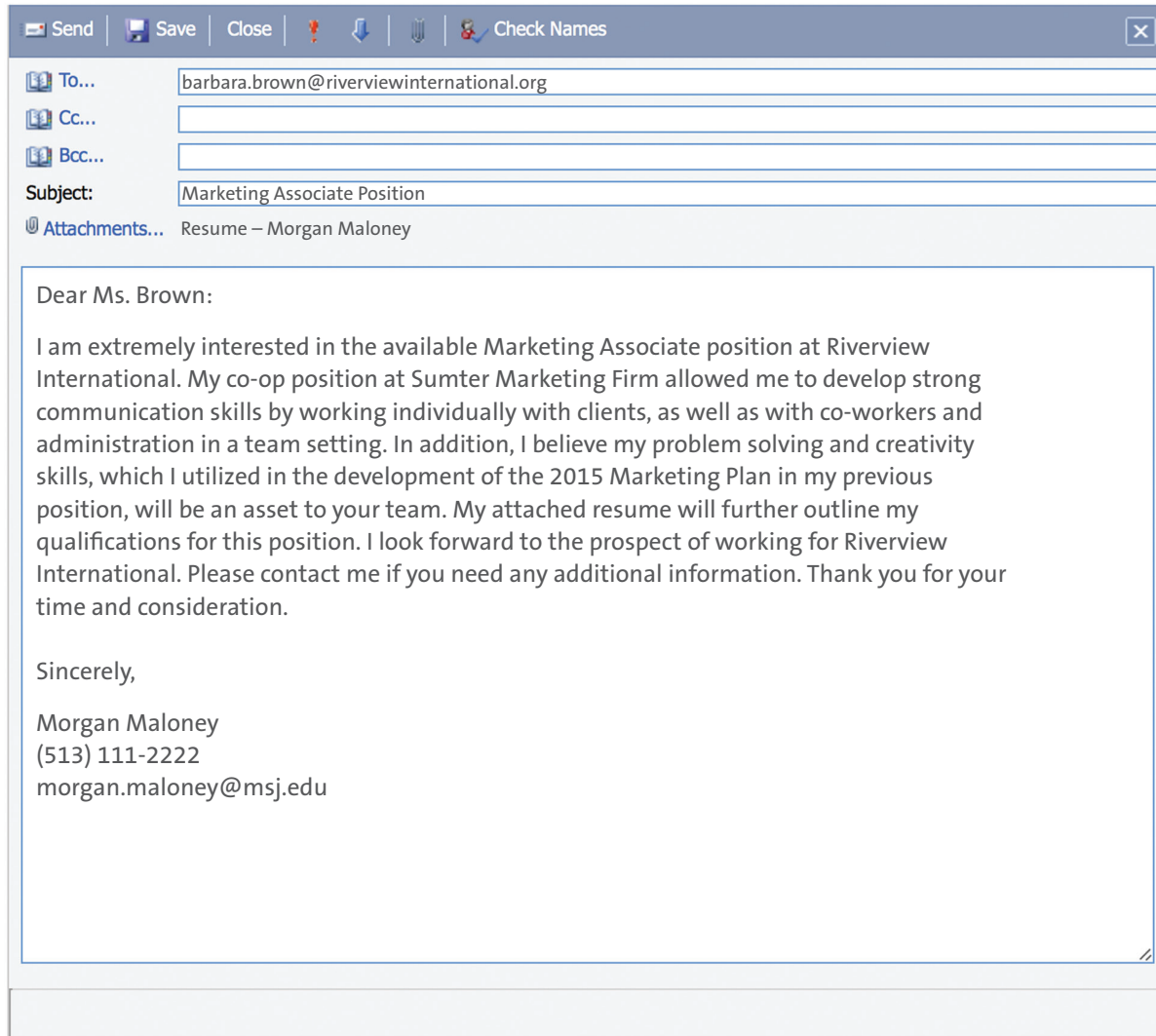
Attached please find my cover letter and resume in response to the available Marketing Associate position at Riverview International. I am extremely interested in the opportunity to join the Marketing team. Please contact me if you need any additional information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Morgan Maloney
(513) 111-2222
morgan.maloney@msj.edu

Sample Resume Only E-mail

If a cover letter is not requested, include a brief summary of your qualifications as it pertains to the specific position in the e-mail.



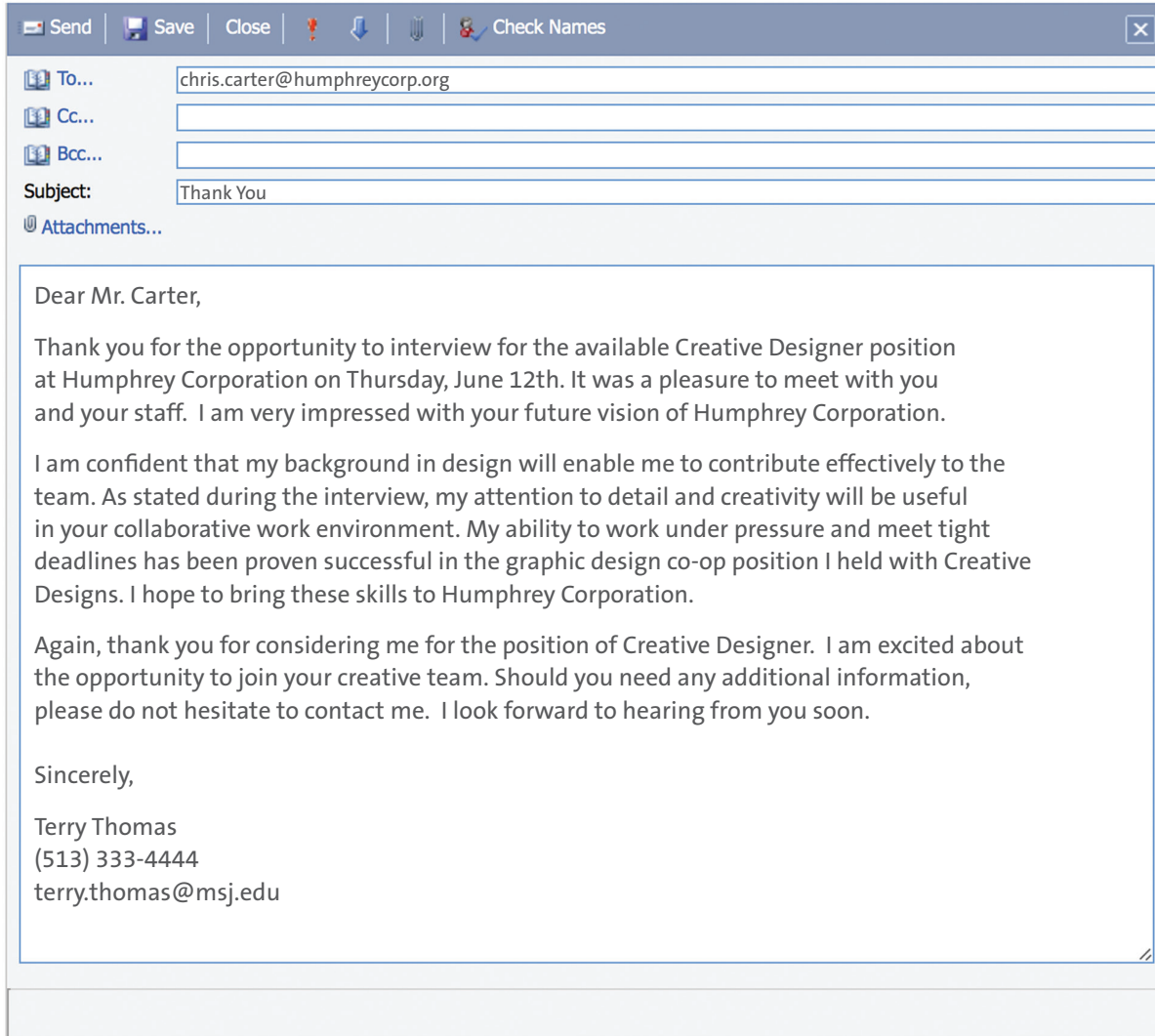
Interview Thank You

It is recommended to send a thank you card or email after an interview to the interviewer(s), preferably within 24-48 hours. This is a crucial part of the interview process and may give you an edge over other candidates.

IN YOUR THANK YOU CARD OR EMAIL

- Express your appreciation for the interviewer's time.
- Include the specific position for which you interviewed.
- Be brief, but add at least one specific detail from the interview.
- Show enthusiasm for the job.
- Reiterate that you have the skills to do the job.
- If handwritten, be sure it is neat and legible.

Sample Interview Thank You E-mail



Sample Interview Thank You Card



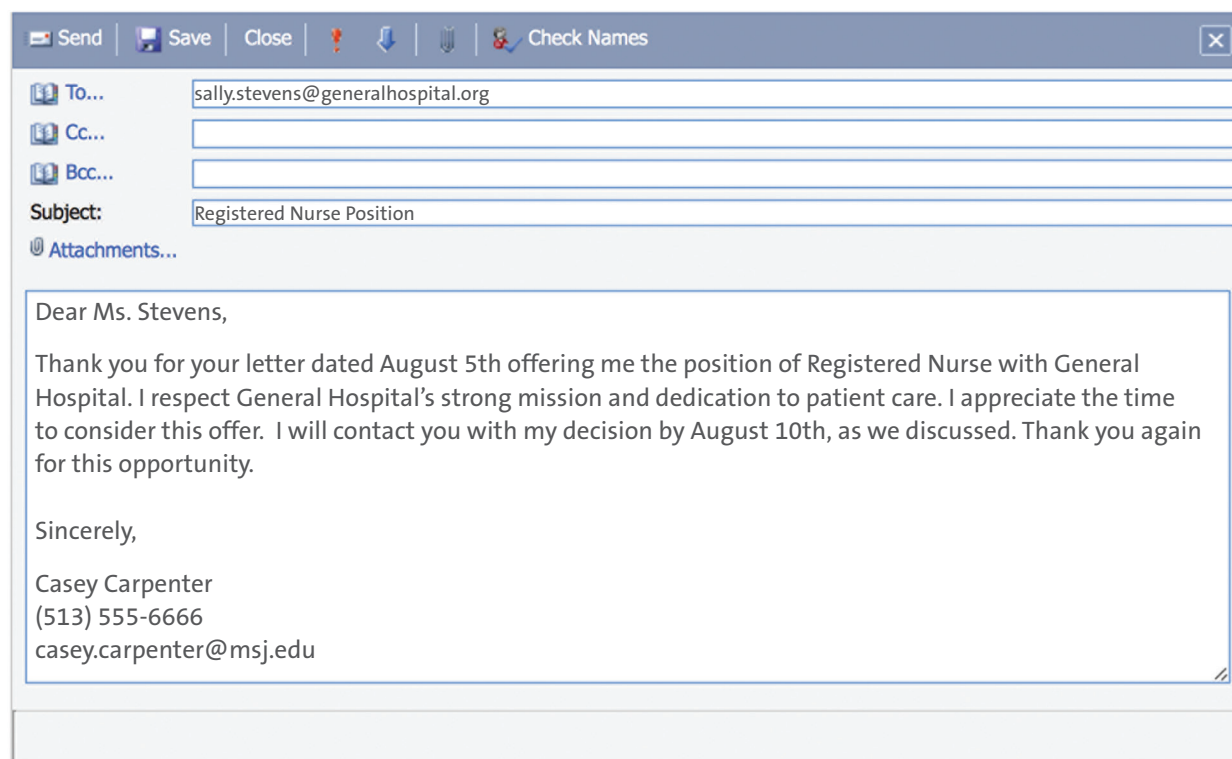
Acknowledgment of Offer

Once you have received an offer from an organization through verbal, written, or electronic correspondence, it is important to respond as soon as possible. While an immediate “yes” or “no” is not recommended without careful review, acknowledgment of the offer is expected.

IN YOUR ACKNOWLEDGMENT OFFER

- Acknowledge receipt of offer.
- Express your appreciation for the offer.
- Confirm with the employer the date by which you agreed to make your decision.

Sample Acknowledgment of Offer



The screenshot shows an email client window with a menu bar containing 'Send', 'Save', 'Close', and 'Check Names'. The email fields are filled with the following information:

- To...:** sally.stevens@generalhospital.org
- Cc...:** (empty)
- Bcc...:** (empty)
- Subject:** Registered Nurse Position
- Attachments...:** (empty)

The email body contains the following text:

Dear Ms. Stevens,

Thank you for your letter dated August 5th offering me the position of Registered Nurse with General Hospital. I respect General Hospital's strong mission and dedication to patient care. I appreciate the time to consider this offer. I will contact you with my decision by August 10th, as we discussed. Thank you again for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Casey Carpenter
(513) 555-6666
casey.carpenter@msj.edu

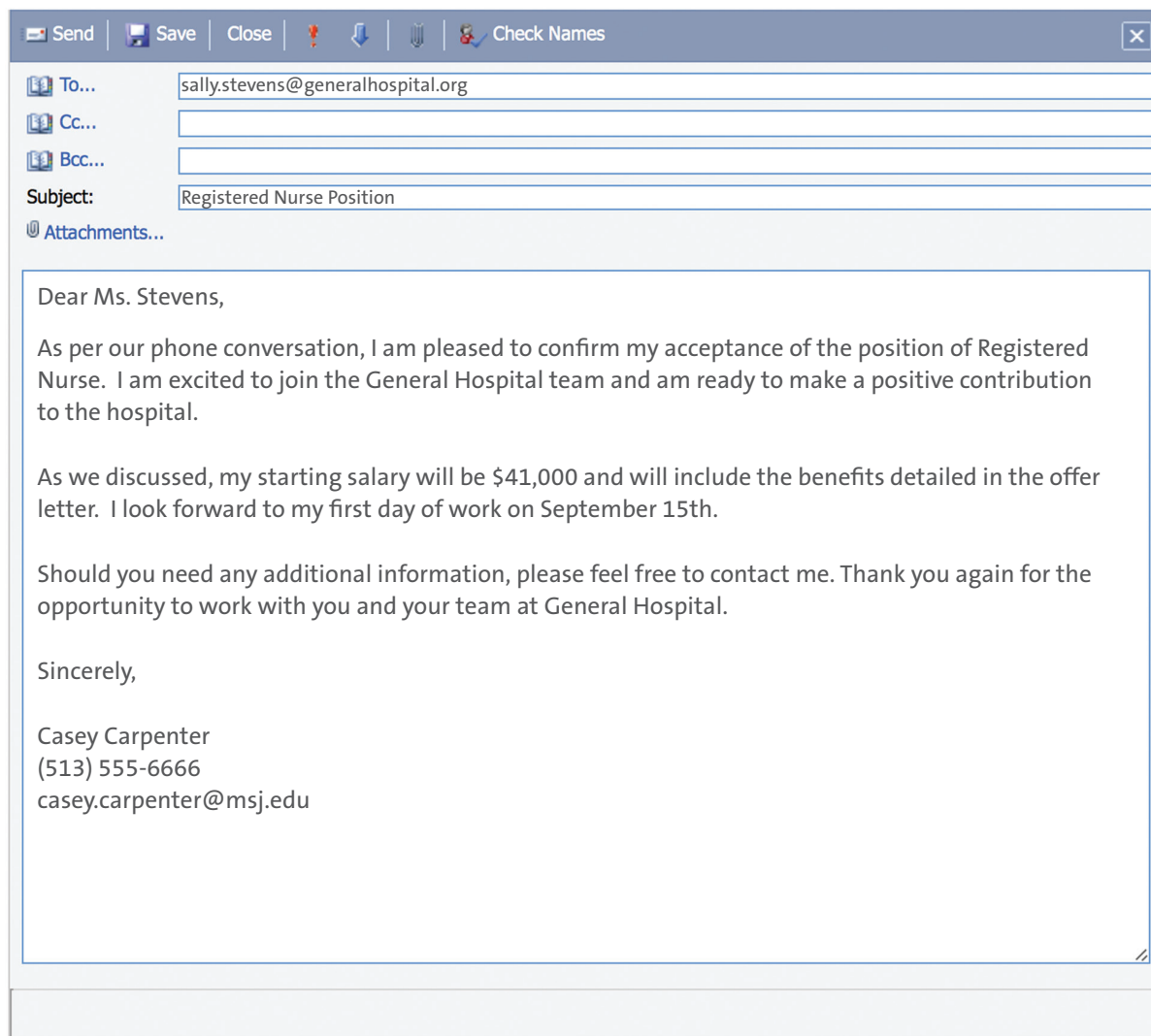
Acceptance of Offer

Once you have decided to accept the offer, the employer should be notified immediately. It is not necessary to wait until the offer expiration date before contacting the person making the offer. Employers will appreciate your promptness as it will expedite their personnel selection process.

IN YOUR ACCEPTANCE OF OFFER

- Acknowledge acceptance of the position.
- Express appreciation for the offer.
- Be as specific as possible, mentioning starting salary and benefits.
- Confirm start date.
- Ask if any other information is required, or if additional details should be attended to prior to start date.

Sample Acceptance of Offer



The image shows a screenshot of an email client window. The window title bar includes "Send", "Save", "Close", and "Check Names". The email header fields are: "To..." with the address "sally.stevens@generalhospital.org", "Cc..." (empty), "Bcc..." (empty), and "Subject:" with the text "Registered Nurse Position". Below the header is an "Attachments..." section. The main body of the email contains the following text:

Dear Ms. Stevens,

As per our phone conversation, I am pleased to confirm my acceptance of the position of Registered Nurse. I am excited to join the General Hospital team and am ready to make a positive contribution to the hospital.

As we discussed, my starting salary will be \$41,000 and will include the benefits detailed in the offer letter. I look forward to my first day of work on September 15th.

Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact me. Thank you again for the opportunity to work with you and your team at General Hospital.

Sincerely,

Casey Carpenter
(513) 555-6666
casey.carpenter@msj.edu

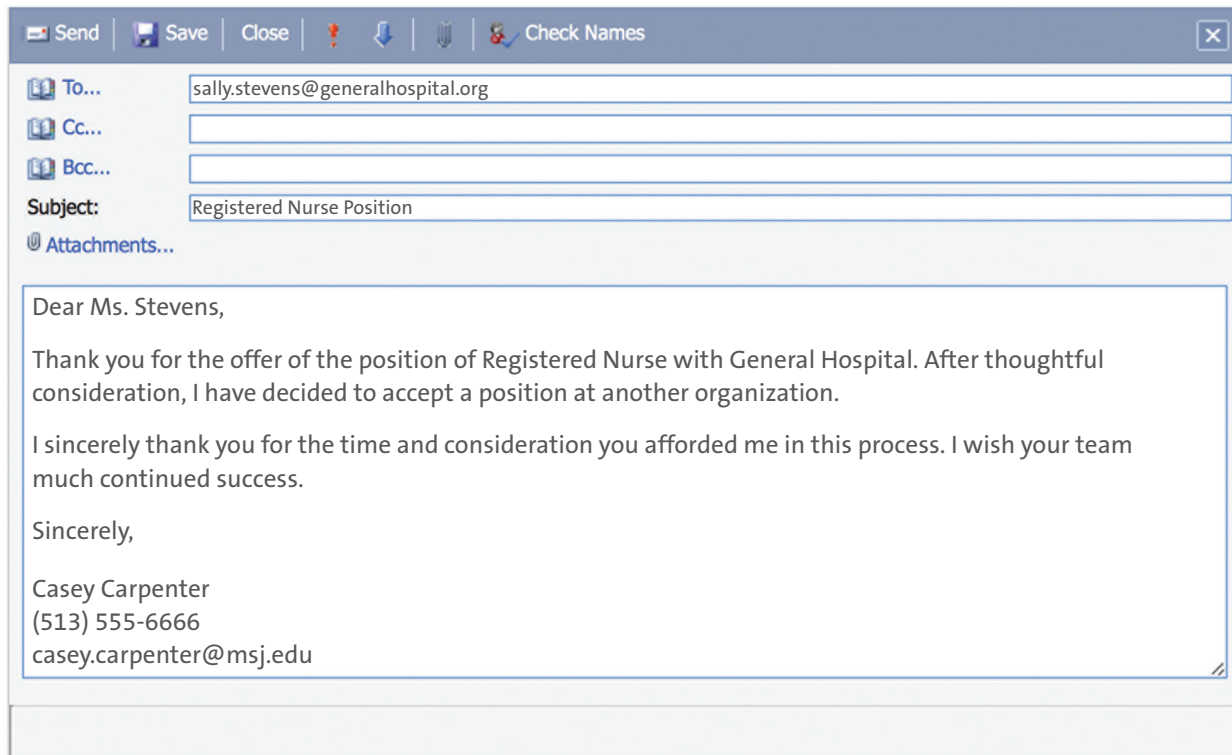
Declination of Offer

A letter of declination is sent to those organizations whose offers you are rejecting. It is vital that these employers know your decisions, as it will allow them to move forward with their personnel selection process. This may take place through verbal or electronic correspondence.

IN YOUR DECLINATION OF OFFER

- Express your appreciation for the offer.
- State the exact position for which you were being considered.
- Respectfully decline the offer.

Sample Declination of Offer



The image shows a screenshot of an email client window. The window title bar includes "Send", "Save", "Close", and "Check Names". The email fields are filled with the following information:

- To...:** sally.stevens@generalhospital.org
- Cc...:** (empty)
- Bcc...:** (empty)
- Subject:** Registered Nurse Position
- Attachments...:** (empty)

The email body contains the following text:

Dear Ms. Stevens,

Thank you for the offer of the position of Registered Nurse with General Hospital. After thoughtful consideration, I have decided to accept a position at another organization.

I sincerely thank you for the time and consideration you afforded me in this process. I wish your team much continued success.

Sincerely,

Casey Carpenter
(513) 555-6666
casey.carpenter@msj.edu

Resignation Letter

A letter of resignation is sent to your employer informing them of your formal resignation and provides a smooth and positive transition out of that company. It also allows you to maintain a positive relationship with the employer in order for you to use them as a reference. It is not only courteous, but may be required by your company as part of your exit process and will be in your personnel file.

IN YOUR RESIGNATION LETTER

- Be as brief as possible.
- Confirm your last day of employment.
- Express appreciation for the employment experience.

Sample Resignation Letter

Your Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Date (Month Date, Year)

Supervisor Name
Supervisor Title
Company name
Company street address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Supervisor's Name,

I regret to inform you that I will be resigning as your Lab Technician on September 27, 2015. I am thankful for the opportunity I have had with Zion Pharmaceuticals. I was able to develop valuable laboratory skills over the last 5 years. It has been a pleasure working with you and the rest of the staff. I wish your team continued success.

Kind Regards,

Signature

Your Name

Special thanks to:

Ohio MEANS
internships
& co-ops



MOUNT ST. JOSEPH
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513-244-4888 | Seton 120
career.center@msj.edu