

Professional Correspondence

Career Development

Room M120

Monday–Friday: 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

careers@mcad.edu

Becky Bates

Director of Career Development
bbates268@mcad.edu
612.874.3796

Sam Wencil

Career Development Advisor
swencil@mcad.edu
612.874.3840

Lizzie Hutchins

Career Development Assistant
lhutchins@mcad.edu
612.874.3721

Important Things to Remember in Your Job Search:

Cover letters should go out with all resumes that are sent. Make sure the cover letter is specific to each job for which you apply—you should work from a template that you rewrite for each job opportunity.

Make sure your resume is always **up to date**. Up to date means keeping the address, cell phone number, email address and website/portfolio link current. It also includes work history, education, and freelance work.

When you email your resume, **follow up** in a few days with an email. Simply say that you are following up to ensure they received your application and to ask if they have any questions about your application, or if they would like to line up an interview with you. When sending an email to inquire, be sure to resend your resume and cover letter as a convenience. If you do the contacting rather than waiting for them, you may get an interview that you otherwise would not have: be assertive, be bold!

Do your homework involving the company you are interviewing with before your interview so you will be prepared to answer any question they may ask. Also, if they ask you if **YOU** have any questions, you can ask knowledgeable questions related to the specific company and job description.

Dress professionally for every interview. Give a firm handshake. Make eye contact.

Always follow up an interview with a **thank you email** within 24 hours of the interview. Reinforce why you should be the candidate of choice. Sometimes it is the follow up email that will get you the job, or that will clinch the job for you if they were wavering between you and someone else. Additionally, you may send a handwritten **thank you letter** via the Postal Service. The extra thoughtfulness of a handwritten note reiterating why you are the best candidate may help.

Go to your interviews prepared with **3 references** and their contact information on a separate document from your resume. Ask 3 people ahead of time who will give you good references. Then, following your interview, call your references so they know they may be contacted and by whom. Ensure your references have received a copy of your most current resume—this should be the same resume you submitted to the job.

Keep track of who you interview with and how you followed up. For an example of a **Contact Tracker** spreadsheet, visit the Career Development intranet page and download a copy.

Promoting Yourself in 25 Seconds or Less

Properly presenting yourself in person or over the phone is very important when making the appropriate first impression. You should develop a brief self-presentation that promotes yourself in 25 seconds or less. Your self-presentation can be used at job fairs when you approach an employer's booth, when you are cold calling employers, over the phone when you are conducting informational interviews, or during the first few minutes of an initial interview.

Your self-presentation should include:

- Your name
- How you learned about the job/company
- Your current employment or education status
- What type of position you are interested in
- What skills and experiences you have to offer

Presented below is a script you can use in developing your self-presentation:

Hello, my name is _____. I was referred to you by _____ from _____. I am a (graduate/student) of the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. I have a / or am studying towards a (Bachelor's, Associate's, Master's, Certificate) degree in _____. I am seeking a position as _____, and I believe my skills and experience in _____ closely match the skills that are required by this position. I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you further concerning my education and professional background, and how that applies to your available position.

Following Up by Email

After you send your application (resume and cover letter), typically the employer will respond with "We're currently screening through applicants and we will contact you when we decide to bring candidates in for interviews." Follow up with another email a couple of days after to find out if the position is still available, the timeframe for interviewing, and if it's possible for you to schedule an interview.

If the position has been filled, or you are not qualified, respond, "I understand that you do not have any additional openings, but do you know of anyone outside the company that you would recommend that I speak with?" Or, "if a position should arise within your organization that is in alignment with my skills and experience, I would appreciate your consideration."

Cover Letter Structure

Date (Start the date 2 inches from the top of the page)

<

< 2 Spaces

Individual's Name

Title

Name of Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

<

<

<

<

< 5 Spaces

Dear Mr./Ms (Individual's Name):

<

< 2 Spaces

First Paragraph: Introduction and context

State the reason for writing. Name the specific position and type of work for which you are applying.

Explain where/how you learned of the position or company.

< 1 Space

Second Paragraph: What you know about them, and what you can contribute

Explain why your past experiences and training make you a great fit for this position and specify how you have the skills stated in the job description. Provide past examples of utilizing those skills.

Include something special or unique about yourself that would benefit the employer. Remember, the reader will consider this an example of your writing skills.

< 1 Space

Third Paragraph: Closing, and invitation to interview

Mention that your resume is enclosed and indicate your desire to meet with the employer. Be sure to communicate your plan to follow up, never leave it up to the employer to get in touch with you.

Finally, thank the employer for their time and consideration.

< 1 Space

Sincerely,

<

<

<

< 3-4 Spaces

Your signature in blue or black ink

Your typed name

Street Address

(Address Optional)

City, State, Zip Code

Phone number with Area Code

Email address

<

< 2 Spaces

Enclosed: Resume

Sample Cover Letter

Date

Ms. Grace Coolidge
Director of Human Resources
ABC Graphics
1234 Valley Drive
Minneapolis, MN 56316

Dear Ms. Coolidge:

It has come to my attention via the Indeed website that the position of Graphic Design Assistant has been made available with ABC Graphics. I possess the creative and technical skills outlined in the job description, and feel I would be an asset to your organization. I am very interested in pursuing this exciting opportunity.

Presently, I am enrolled at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, and I expect to graduate in May of 2019. I have extensive training in computer graphics, electronic imaging, and production. I am skilled in Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and InDesign. While working in a team environment, I have created and developed logos, branding, and innovative marketing concepts. I feel this experience would be highly beneficial in the Creative Design Department at ABC Graphics.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss my background and qualifications. Thank you for taking the time to review my resume and consider my qualifications. I will be in touch to follow-up with you by the end of the next week.

Sincerely,

Jessica Thompson
15 South 9th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402
612-234-5678
jthompson@gmail.com

(Address Optional)

Enclosed: Resume

Sample Thank You Letter

Sample 1

Date

Ms. Jill McElroy

Title

Company Name

Company, Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Ms. McElroy,

I enjoyed meeting with you and Mr. Smith yesterday morning. Thank you for the opportunity to review my work and discuss my background and qualifications as they pertain to our industry. The business philosophy at ABC Graphics and your vision for the future is very exciting!

Per our conversation, I feel confident that my education, training, and experience in the field of Graphic Design would be of great benefit to ABC Graphics. You discussed the importance of teamwork—please know that I work very well in a team environment, as well as independently.

Again, thank you for your time and I look forward to the possibility of working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Your signature here

(Signature optional if sent via email)

Your name typed here

Your Address

City, State, Zip

Phone Number

(Address Optional)

Sample Thank You Letter

Sample 2

Today's Date

Mr. John Tyler
Owner Operator
Signs by Tomorrow
123 First Street
Anytown, MN 55112

Dear Mr. Tyler:

Thank you for the opportunity of interviewing for the Sign Maker position last Monday afternoon, especially during a busy work day. I also wanted to thank Sarah and the others for the tour of the facility. I am impressed by the enthusiasm displayed by the staff. The atmosphere made me feel welcome and I am sure customers feel that way as well.

I am very interested in pursuing an opportunity in the area of sign production and very much appreciate your consideration for this position. The prospect of working in a position that is varied and includes hands-on skills is very appealing to me. If you should have any additional questions concerning my qualifications, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Joy Johnson
1111 Black Oak Drive
Anytown, MN 55318
555-555-5555

(Address Optional)

Sample Thank You Letter

Sample 3

Today's Date

Mr. Herbert Hoover
Art Director
ABC Graphics
123 First Street
Anywhere, MN 55112

Dear Mr. Hoover:

I enjoyed meeting with you and the other members of the ABC Graphics team yesterday afternoon to discuss the Graphic Design position you have available. Thank you for the opportunity to review my work and discuss my background and qualifications as they pertain to our industry and the position. I am extremely interested in pursuing the opportunity and would appreciate your consideration as your candidate of choice.

If you should require additional materials or information as it pertains to my professional credentials, please do not hesitate to contact me. Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ida Garfield