



# COVER LETTER AND THANK YOU LETTER GUIDE



**CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**

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## **A. COVER LETTERS**

### **I. OVERVIEW - WHAT IS A COVER LETTER?**

A cover letter should always accompany your resume to a potential employer, unless the employer specifically requests otherwise.

A cover letter has two main objectives: 1) it is a marketing tool, which allows you to highlight your skills to the potential employer; and 2) it is a writing sample of sorts, which allows you to demonstrate writing and editing skills.

Specifically, a cover letter allows you to personalize your job search. It should include information that explains your interest in an employer and relates your specific qualifications and experience to the employer's type of work and hiring needs. It is a written introduction to your resume, professional characteristics and attributes, enabling you to elaborate more fully on your most relevant skills and to explain your interest in the sought-after position. It is your first opportunity to draw an employer's attention to your credentials and writing style. The cover letter can also set you apart from other applicants by highlighting special things about you that make you a worthy candidate, such as geographical and academic ties, and interesting employment or life experiences. As with your resume, a cover letter should be clear and to the point. Every letter you write to a prospective employer should focus on your skills and qualifications as they relate to the target job and encourage the employer to meet you.

### **II. THE PURPOSES OF A COVER LETTER**

The main purposes of a cover letter are to:

- Convince the employer to seriously consider you as a candidate;
- Act as a writing sample for review by a potential employer;
- Enhance your resume with additional information not necessarily reflected on your resume (e.g., job availability, when you will be in the area);
- Emphasize why you would be a valuable addition to an organization, and why you would be suited for a particular position;
- Highlight how specific aspects of your experiences, skills and interests relate or apply to that particular employer or position; and
- Notify the employer of your geographic ties to the community, thereby demonstrating your commitment to the area.

### **III. GETTING STARTED**

#### **Before you write:**

- Think about the skills, abilities, background and experience that make you a good candidate for an employer, and then communicate those things in an engaging manner;
- Focus on two or three selling points which you want to convey to the potential employer, and give concrete examples;
- Focus on what you have to offer the employer, instead of what the job will do for you;
- Research each potential employer;
- Think about the qualities employers are looking for and what they are likely to find valuable;
- Draft a good generic letter;
- Customize the letter for each employer;
- Be professional and write with the knowledge that your audience is a conservative profession.

### **When you write:**

- Keep the cover letter to one page and write it in a business letter format;
- Write a personalized letter. If writing to an attorney in a firm that has a recruiter, always copy (cc) the recruiter;
- Proofread your letter and thoroughly check for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar; Have your Career Development Office (“CDO”) advisor and/or someone else also review it;
- Be clear, concise, flawless and positive;
- Answer any obvious questions raised by your application (e.g., geographic connection);
- Tailor your letter to the specific posting to which you are responding;
- Send & reference all required information with your letter (e.g., resume, transcript, references, writing sample).

### **After you write:**

- Verify all information in the cover letter;
- Proofread the letter and have your CDO advisor or someone else proofread it as well;
- Use the same font and paper as your resume;
- If you use a mail merge, triple check for glitches (e.g., check that the inside address and body of the letter match);
- Call and follow up if you have not received any response after about 2 weeks;
- Keep records of the positions for which you have applied. Maintain copies of all correspondence.

## **IV. COVER LETTER CONTENT AND DRAFTING**

### **Opening Paragraph – Who You Are and What You Want:**

The opening paragraph should induce the reader to continue to read, and so your principal objective is to make a good first impression. Your first paragraph should explain who you are and why you are writing. If you were referred to the employer by someone in particular, it is wise to point this out early in the letter so that the employer can take special notice from the beginning. Specifics about connections to the employer or ties to the city should also be included in this paragraph.

### **Body – Why the Employer Should Hire You:**

The body of the letter can range from one to two short paragraphs, depending on the organization and content of the material. Explain what you can offer, and why the employer should hire you. The body of the letter should identify your specific interests and qualifications, and explain how they relate to the employer’s particular practice area and/or what the employer is specifically looking for in a candidate. Try to reference language used by the employer in the position description in your cover letter. Give the employer exactly what they are looking for. For instance, if the firm has indicated that it seeks someone with excellent research and writing skills, make certain that you specifically mention your good grades in LComm and/or other projects that may have involved extensive writing experience. If you feel it is too early in your legal career to show such a relationship, then highlight any skills and experiences that might have general applicability, such as leadership skills or the ability to communicate effectively. Use specific and detailed examples. Explain the reason(s) for your interest in the particular employer and job.

### **Conclusion – Wrap Up:**

The last paragraph is usually the easiest one to write and can contain: (a) times you are available for an interview; (b) a brief reiteration of your interest in the employer; (c) an offer to send additional information or materials and information; (d) plans to visit the area (give several weeks lead time); and (e) preferred method of contact. Also, thank the employer for his or her time and consideration. **Last But Not Least – Edit and Proofread!**

## V. OUTLINE OF A COVER LETTER

Name  
Your Street Address  
City, State Zip Code  
Telephone  
Email

Date

First and Last Name of Contact Person  
Contact Title  
Employer Name  
Street Address  
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name of Contact Person:

**First Paragraph:** State why you are writing, name the position for which you are applying, and state why you are interested in working for the particular employer. If you have lived in the area or know it well, mention this. Specify your interests in the type of work the firm does and what is particularly appealing to you about the employer. The opening paragraph should be short and to the point, and should convey to the reader your purpose in writing. For instance: "Please accept my application for a position as a legal intern with Miami Legal Aid for the summer of 2016. I am a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law, with strong research and writing skills and a keen interest in gaining experience in representing disadvantaged individuals." If someone has referred you, you should open with a sentence telling the addressee who has referred you to the employer. If you have a prior connection with the person to whom you are addressing the letter or to another lawyer at the firm, you might begin your letter describing the connection.

**Second Paragraph:** Focus on the talents and skills you possess that meet the needs of the employer. If you have had work experience, courses, publications or clinic experience, be sure to point out the particular achievements you have accomplished in the employer's field or type of work. Indicate why you are qualified for the job. Use the body of the cover letter to highlight items on your resume and to supplement information on your resume. Emphasize law school honors and activities, legal writing and research proficiency, and talents and skills gained from work or volunteer activities, as well as activities that highlight your leadership, teamwork or organizational abilities, motivation, and enthusiasm.

**Third Paragraph:** The closing paragraph should be concise. Request the opportunity to interview for a position. If it is an out-of-town interview, indicate your willingness to interview personally by stating when you will be in the area or by offering to make yourself available at the employer's convenience. Provide the reader with a telephone number or email address in order to contact you to request additional information or set up an interview. If you have not done so in the opening paragraph, mention the documents that you have enclosed. Thank the employer for his/her consideration.

Sincerely,

[leave 4 blank lines for signature (signature should always be in ink)]

Your Name (typed)

## **VI. COVER LETTER TIPS**

- Research the employer before writing and create an individualized cover letter for every resume you send (this typically entails tweaking your generic letter as needed);
- Be honest and professional;
- Support general statements about yourself with specific examples;
- Demonstrate and prove your commitment or ties to the geographic location you have targeted, especially if it is one where you did not attend school or grow up;
- Show that you have researched your potential employer and communicate something that you have learned about that specific organization or one of its attorneys;
- If you use the word “I” more than three or four times to start a sentence, alter your sentence structure so the word “I” is eliminated;
- Zero errors-proofread carefully for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation – employers use your cover letter to assess your communication and writing abilities and any errors will count against you-think of the letter as a writing sample;
- Indicate your specific interest in the particular position or organization;
- Address the letter to an individual, not a generic entity, such as “To Whom it May Concern.” Instead, call the firm or entity and ask to whom you should send your application materials. Use the complete and correct name, title, company and/or firm name, and address. Always personalize your letter. In situations where you are not able to obtain the name of a specific person, you should address the letter to “Hiring Partner” or “Hiring Attorney” and/or “Dear Sir or Madam” if you really cannot locate a contact;
- Refer the reader to your enclosures (resume, transcript, writing sample, etc.);
- Make sure to address the employer’s needs in the letter;
- Use the same font and good quality bond paper that you use for your resume;
- Ask for an interview and follow up on all correspondence;
- Avoid letters that are bland. Discuss topics in a confident and positive tone;
- Include your return address in the letter. Do not forget to sign your cover letter.

## **VII. WORST THINGS TO PUT IN A COVER LETTER**

- Next to Nothing. Although writing a lengthy cover letter is a common mistake, a cover letter that is too short can be even more damaging. Do not repeat your resume; rather, enhance it.
- Personal Stories. Keep it professional and formal with regard to the language used and the content. Save the anecdotes, hobbies, etc. for an interview setting, especially if they give an idea about work ethic and other positive personal traits or characteristics.
- Irrelevant Experience or Lack of Experience. Some candidates acknowledge that they possess virtually no experience in the potential employer’s practice areas, yet expect to be considered and hired. Convey relevant and/or transferable skills and focus on specific relevant experience.
- Jokes. Jokes in cover letters are completely inappropriate. Stick to conventional dialogue concerning your education and work experience.
- Mistakes, Erroneous Information, Wrong Employer. Be careful not to misspell the name of the contact or employer. Sometimes, candidates are rushed to apply for various positions and simply copy and paste information from generic cover letters. Those types of errors, which are easily remedied, can give the impression that the candidate is not paying attention to details. That is why every letter should be directed toward the specific employer.

## **VIII. EMAIL VERSUS REGULAR MAIL**

Regular mail is the traditional method of sending your cover letter, resume and other correspondence to a potential employer. However, emailing correspondence is common and acceptable for many employers, especially nowadays. If you are not certain which to do, you can certainly send your materials via both methods. One general rule is that for larger employers, email is now the preferred way to apply. When using email, though, it is important that cover letters, resumes and all other "formal letters" be sent as individual attachments written and appearing as if you were mailing them. Do not write your full letter in the body of the email. This format is important because your materials will likely be printed out at some point and they should appear as formal documents.

The subject line of your email should indicate the purpose of your contact, such as "Application for Summer Internship". In the body of your email, you may want to insert a modified version of the first paragraph of your cover letter so that the recipient has an idea why you are contacting him or her.

You do not need to include your mailing address and the date in the body of your email. You can begin with "Dear Ms. Smith:" (See Sample Email on page 26 in this guide). Since it is easy to make mistakes when sending emails, here are a few suggestions to ensure that you send what you intend:

- Do not put in the address of the recipient until you are ready to send;
- Confirm that you are sending the correct version of your cover letter and resume;
- Send a blind copy to yourself to confirm what was sent and make it easy to resend it if necessary;

## **IX. COMMON COVER LETTER MISTAKES**

The following are some common errors commonly found in legal cover letters:

- **Restating Your Resume:** *"I graduated from the University of Miami School of Law in 2015, and undergraduate with a B.A., cum laude, in Psychology and worked in academia prior to law school."* Do not waste space with facts that are readily found on your resume. Instead, focus on how your work experience, academics and background fit in with the employer's criteria and requirements for the position. You may also use the space to explain anything that might be unclear or questionable on your resume such as a gap in employment, change in career paths or ties to a new community.
- **Focusing on Yourself & What You Can Get Out of the Job:** *"I am certain that I would obtain significant experience in light of your firm's varied practice areas."* Note that you are trying to market yourself to an employer, not vice versa. Employers will grant an interview to qualified candidates who can offer value to their organizations. Do not give the impression that you expect the employer to place you in a position that satisfies your needs, instead of theirs. It is more effective to indicate what contributions you can make to the organization instead of what you can obtain from the experience.
- **Being Informal & Not Professional Enough:** *"I'm so excited by the possibility of working with you. I am passionate about criminal law and would love to meet with you about the position."* Although enthusiasm is good, it should be presented professionally. Do not use anecdotes or personal language. You run the risk of not being seriously considered. You should always keep a polite, respectful and professional tone in your letter.
- **Making Excuses or Being Apologetic:** *"I know my GPA is low, but I faced several challenges in the transition to law school."* Employers do not want to hear excuses or justifications for negative aspects of your record and background. Always focus on the positives.

- Making Unsupported Statements of Your Skills and Abilities: *“I am highly motivated and have an excellent work ethic.”* Such general and broad statements, without corroborating examples, really do not help make an employer interested in someone as a candidate. For example, instead of saying you have strong communication skills, provide examples: *“I recently received significant praise for my ability to relay complex information to other law clerks.”*
- Giving Generic Reason for Interest in Employer: *“I am interested in your firm due to its excellent reputation.”* This sentence, without additional support or reasons for your interest in the employer, demonstrates lack of research and, therefore, lack of knowledge about the employer.
- Failure to Follow Directions: Failure to follow instructions does not make a good first impression and indicates carelessness and a lack of interest in the job. Be sure to review the posting several times and follow all instructions outlined therein. Following instructions outlined by the employer will automatically put you ahead of all the other applicants who disregard them.
- Emphasizing Lack of Experience/Underselling Your Talents: *“Although I really do not have substantial experience in personal injury law, I am interested in learning.”* Do not call attention to your weaknesses or lack of experience. This only emphasizes your weaknesses instead of your strengths. Focus on your skills and legal exposure.

## **B. JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP LETTERS**

### **I. WHAT TO INCLUDE**

Many first-year students who apply for judicial internships often do not have a great deal of legal experience to discuss in their cover letters. Because most first-year students are in the same situation, this is not a problem. As a first-year applicant, you can use examples from your undergraduate or prior work experience to illustrate the skills and qualities that will make you a successful judicial intern. If you did well in legal research and writing, you should include this in the letter because research and writing are typically important aspects of judicial internships. Of course, if you are a second-year or third-year student who is applying for a judicial internship, you should focus on the legal skills you possess. Judges typically receive many applications and can only choose a small number of interns; therefore, your cover letter should stand out.

#### **FOR EXAMPLE:**

Letter #1: I am uniquely qualified for the position of judicial intern. I have excellent writing and research skills and hope to further develop them through the internship experience. (This information does not prove useful for the judge to evaluate you.)

#### **BUT:**

Letter #2: As an undergraduate research assistant for Professor Robert Merriman, I was able to hone my research skills, especially in the area of employment discrimination law. After conducting extensive research on the recent changes to Title VII, I learned a great deal about the intricacies of employment law, as well as different techniques to effectively research issues. I also developed my writing abilities by contributing to an article that was published in a scholarly journal. (This letter is much more specific, uses examples and is, therefore, more effective.)

## **II. ADDRESSING LETTERS FOR JUDICIAL INTERNSHIPS:**

You should always use the form of address appropriate for the particular judge. Letters should show proper deference to the judge by stating the judge's title correctly. The following are guidelines for correctly addressing cover letters:

- Use "The Honorable" before the judge's name.
- In most cases, the title for judges who sit on courts that have the name "Supreme" is "Justice." All other judges are called "Judge."
- The correct title for a magistrate is United States Magistrate Judge.
- If the judge is the Chief Judge, Chief Justice or Senior Judge, address him or her as such.
- The appropriate closing in a letter to a judge is "Respectfully" instead of "Sincerely."

For detailed information about judicial internships and cover letters to judges, please review the Judicial Internship Guide and the Judicial Clerkship located in the CDO Resource Library or online.

## **C. THANK YOU LETTERS**

### ***I. INTRODUCTION:***

Thank you letters allow you to: 1) thank an interviewer for his or her time; 2) remind an interviewer of similar interests discussed during the interview; and 3) reiterate your interest in a position. A well written thank you letter should be sent **within twenty-four (24) hours of the interview**, and may set you apart from the other candidates that did not follow up after the interview.

The lack of a thank-you letter can factor in the hiring decision. If a job candidate cannot find the time to write a brief note, the employer might wonder whether the student will be able to apply attention to detail and/or protocol on the job.

### ***II. WHEN AND TO WHOM TO SEND THANK YOU LETTERS***

Thank you letters should be sent in a variety of circumstances, not simply after an interview. For example, when someone: 1) refers you to employers; 2) offers you a position; 3) provides you with general information during an informational interview; or 4) writes a recommendation for you.

Expressing your thanks to professional associates for their time, effort and consideration on your behalf is common courtesy, good manners and an excellent way to reinforce your strong interest in particular employers. It goes without saying that you should always verbally express thanks for an employer's time and courtesy.

### ***III. DIFFERENT THANK YOU LETTER SCENARIOS***

#### **a. After Initial Interviews**

Although large employers who participate in on-campus interviewing ("OCI") during the fall and spring semesters and at job fairs do not always expect thank you letters from each and every student they interview, you should try to send thank you letters to the attorney(s) with whom you interviewed, as well as to the recruiting coordinator, if applicable. Smaller employers, employers who may not engage in widespread recruiting, or employers who granted you a particular courtesy (like a "special request" or movement from "alternate" status) may truly appreciate hearing your sincere thanks for their time. In these situations, writing a thank you letter is strongly recommended.

#### **b. After Callback Interviews/Recruiting Reception or Dinner**

A callback or in-office interview takes an employer considerable time and effort to arrange and conduct, especially when they include a meal or other refreshments. Thank you letters are almost always appropriate and appreciated after callback / in-office interviews. You should write to the attorney(s) with whom you met and the recruiting coordinator, if applicable. Do not send a form thank you letter, with only the name changed, to each person on the team that interviewed you. Letters are usually placed in a central file and it would be apparent that not much thought went into the form letter. When e-mailing a thank you to several persons within an organization, take the time to send each an individual message, not a "cc."

Even in a tight economy, some employers will go to some length to arrange recruiting receptions, dinners and lunches to better acquaint candidates with their organizations. Employers appreciate students who do not take these efforts for granted or treat them as standard entitlements. Thus, it is appropriate to express written thanks for a dinner or other event where you (or a group of your peers) are an honored guest.

**c. After Informational Interviews**

It is critical that you always send a written thank you to anyone who takes the time to talk with you on an informational basis (rather than for recruiting purposes) about your career goals. Informational interviews (see the Networking Guide for more information on these types of interviews) are excellent ways to learn more about fields that interest you, as well as to develop relationships with practicing attorneys. Always send written thanks after any sort of informational meeting or telephone conference.

***IV. HARD COPY BUSINESS LETTERS, E-MAILS OR HANDWRITTEN NOTES***

When you feel a thank you is necessary, how do you decide whether a traditional business letter or e-mail is appropriate? The protocol for using e-mail for certain types of correspondence between legal employers and applicants is still evolving. Although e-mailing thank you letters is acceptable, some employers still express a preference for traditional thank you letters or a handwritten thank you note on those occasions calling for a special follow-up. A primary consideration should be given to how much of your communication to date with the employer has been by e-mail. If you are still uncertain about whether an employer is e-friendly, stick to using hard copy. Importantly, make sure you use a professional business format and tone, no matter which style thank you letter you send. ***Also refer to Section VIII on page 6 in this guide.***

**a. Hard Copy Business Letters**

Hard copy letters have the advantages of being more formal. They require more effort, so they receive more attention from the writer and the reader.

**b. Thank You E-mails**

The advantage and disadvantage of e-mail is the same – it is fast and easy. It is easy in e-mail to lapse into youthful jargon, overly casual language or irony that does not translate well in writing. It is also easy in e-mail to press “send” quickly without spell-checking or reviewing for grammatical mistakes, or making sure you have the right contact in the “TO” line.

**c. Handwritten Thank You Notes**

If you have conservative, good quality stationery and legible handwriting, a handwritten note can be appropriate under certain circumstances, such as time constraints, no access to computers and printers, and your rapport or relationship with the recipient. For example, a good handwritten note can convey great sincerity and personal interest. However, some recipients may conclude that the author is not comfortable preparing professional business correspondence. If you decide to use this method, do not send the notes on cards with greetings or decoration, neither of which is appropriate for first-time business associates. To avoid any potential mishap, hard copy business letters are generally preferred over handwritten notes.

***V. TIPS FOR THANK YOU LETTERS***

**The thank you letter should:**

- Be absolutely free of any typographical, grammatical or other errors;
- Be short (i.e., no more than 3 short paragraphs);
- Contain a short reference to something you discussed (to jog the reader’s memory down the road);
- Be sent promptly after the event in question (within 24 hours, if possible).

**The thank you letter should not:**

- Be a second bite at the cover letter apple;
- Be casual, familiar, relaxed or unusual.

# **SAMPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE**

❖ **FIRST YEAR LETTER-FIRM**

1111 Main Street  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

January 23, 2016

Mary S. Clarke  
Recruitment Coordinator  
Weeble & Wobble, P.A.  
123 Star Avenue  
Suite 4205  
Los Angeles, CA 90000

Dear Ms. Clarke:

I am a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law and I am interested in obtaining a 2015 summer associate position with Weeble & Wobble, P.A.

As an undergraduate, I received a bachelor's degree in economics, with a focus on finance. I am particularly drawn to Weeble & Wobble because of the firm's reputable labor department, as working in this area would allow me to draw upon my economics background. However, I also seek a summer position that will allow me to gain exposure to a variety of different practice areas. After researching your firm, I learned that Weeble & Wobble rotates its summer associates through all of its departments. Thus, I know that working for your firm would offer me an interesting and varied workload.

I have enclosed my resume for your review and welcome the opportunity to further discuss my candidacy with you. I am confident that my background and experience will enable me to make a positive contribution to your clients. Should you wish to schedule an interview or require additional information, please contact me at (305) 222-2222. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Rosa M. Gomez

❖ **FIRST YEAR LETTER-GOVERNMENT**

243 Sebastian Way  
Miami, Florida 33175

February 4, 2016

Vincent J. Carroll, Jr., Esquire  
Counsel to the CADA  
Queens County District Attorney's Office  
125-01 Queens Boulevard  
Kew Gardens, New York 11415

Dear Mr. Carroll:

I am a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law who is interested in working as a legal intern in the Queens County District Attorney's Office in summer 2015. Upon graduation, I hope to become a criminal prosecutor and working in your office would be an invaluable step toward that goal. Furthermore, my background and interests are well suited to the work conducted by your office.

As an undergraduate, I learned about the trial process through my work as a counselor and student judge for the University Judiciary Committee. I enjoyed interviewing and preparing witnesses for hearings, analyzing the facts of cases and drafting opinions. I continued to develop my research and writing skills by working on a project with the Dade County Bar *Pro Bono* Program this fall. These experiences have greatly contributed to my desire to pursue a career as a trial attorney, in part because I witnessed the crucial role that attorneys play in ensuring justice for all parties in need of representation in legal proceedings.

If offered this opportunity, I believe that I could make a substantial contribution to your office. I hope to meet with you to discuss my qualifications for a position with the Queens County District Attorney's Office. Should you wish to schedule an interview, please contact me at (212) 223-5647. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Robert J. Finnegan

❖ **FIRST YEAR LETTER-PUBLIC INTEREST**

275 Biscayne Boulevard  
Miami, Florida 33131

November 10, 2015

Jennifer Rose  
Legal Aid Society of Atlanta  
22 East State Street, Suite 222  
Atlanta, Georgia 22222

Dear Ms. Rose:

Please accept my application for the position of summer law clerk with the Legal Aid Society of Atlanta. As a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law, I am committed to using my legal skills to provide representation to underrepresented individuals in our society. Additionally, a position with your organization would be ideal because I am originally from Atlanta and wish to return there after completing law school.

While pursuing my undergraduate degree at Emory College, I volunteered regularly with the Habitat for Humanity program, and answered telephones for a battered women's hotline. I am currently a member of the Equal Justice Foundation and attained a leadership role in my class as a first-year class representative to the Student Bar Association. I believe that these experiences can be well utilized in the public interest context and am eager to gain exposure to the functions of a public interest law organization.

I have enclosed my resume for your review and welcome the opportunity to discuss a possible summer position with Legal Aid and to learn more about public interest opportunities in the Atlanta area. I will be in Georgia for the winter holiday and will be available to meet with you in late December or early January. Should you wish to schedule an interview, please contact me at (404) 555-2525 or [amoores@yahoo.com](mailto:amoores@yahoo.com). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Arianna Moore

❖ **FIRST YEAR LETTER-JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP**

467 Brickell Avenue  
Miami, Florida 33131

January 6, 2016

The Honorable Paul Newman  
New Hampshire District Court  
1500 West End Avenue  
Gables, New Hampshire 00000

Dear Judge Newman:

As a New Hampshire native and a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law, I am seeking a judicial internship with your chambers for the summer of 2016.

I am interested in working as a judicial intern to gain valuable experience within the court system and to utilize my research and writing skills. During my first semester of law school, I received an "A" in my legal research and writing class. Additionally, as an undergraduate research assistant at the University of New Hampshire, I conducted extensive research for and contributed to an article that was published in a national political science journal.

My resume is enclosed for your review and I would appreciate having an opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in further detail. Should you wish to schedule an interview, please contact me at (305) 555-2222. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

[SIGNATURE]

John R. Anderson

❖ **SECOND YEAR LETTER-FIRM**

8985 South West 10th Terrace  
Miami, Florida 33176

August 31, 2015

Hiram Walker, Esquire  
Hiring Partner  
Marbury, Jones & Wilcox LLP  
123 Main Street  
Newark, New Jersey 07111

Dear Mr. Walker:

Emily Dickinson, an associate in your office, told me a great deal about your firm after a recent seminar she gave at the University of Miami School of Law, where I am a second-year student. After speaking with Ms. Dickinson and as a Newark native who plans to return there after graduation, I am interested in learning more about legal clerkship opportunities with your firm for summer 2016.

I am particularly interested in the work your firm does in the area of commercial litigation. Last summer, I worked for a litigation law firm specializing in commercial real estate transactions. Prior to that experience, I spent a summer working for the Securities and Exchange Commission, where I had the opportunity to conduct legal research and review documents pertaining to diverse issues ranging from efficient markets policies to capital formation legislation.

I have enclosed my resume for your review and I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications. Should you wish to schedule an interview, please contact me at (305) 555-1314. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Alice Johnson

❖ **THIRD YEAR LETTER-PUBLIC INTEREST**

4543 Canes Street  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

February 23, 2016

Hiram Walker, Esquire  
Florida Civil Rights Project  
123 Main Street  
Miami, Florida 33333

Dear Mr. Walker:

I am a third-year student at the University of Miami School of Law, and I am expecting my degree in May of 2016. At present, I am seeking a permanent position and am very interested in the Florida Civil Rights Project because of its commitment to investigation and advocacy in the field of civil liberties. I am particularly intrigued by your work with prisoners' issues such as police misconduct, prisoners' rights and death penalty defense.

As noted on my resume, I have taken the opportunity to gain practical experience in these fields, as well as in other human rights areas, in the summers during law school and during the academic year. In addition, I structured my academic experience around this interest, conducting graduate psychology research on behavior in the criminal and corrections contexts and continuing similar research in the juvenile system in law school. I look forward to applying this research and experience as a practicing attorney.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about a position with the Florida Civil Rights Project. Should you wish to schedule an interview, please contact me at (305) 555-5555. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

James V. Walker

❖ **REFERRAL LETTER**

10 Anastasia Avenue  
Coral Gables, Florida 33124

March 2, 2016

Laura Smith  
Recruiting Coordinator  
Cran & Berry  
22 East State Street, Suite 222  
Rochester, New York 11111

Dear Ms. Smith:

Tom Jones, of Smith & Jones in Rochester, recommended that I contact you regarding a position as a summer law clerk with Cran & Berry. I am a native of New York and a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law who is eager to return to the Rochester area next summer. Enclosed for your review is a copy of my resume.

I understand from my conversations with Mr. Jones that your firm focuses on the representation of small companies in a variety of legal settings, and I am particularly interested in this kind of legal practice. In addition to my undergraduate degree in business, I am seeking to focus my law coursework to prepare me for a career in business law. During the coming academic year, I intend to take courses in tax, corporations and secured transactions.

Currently, I am ranked in the top one-third of my class and obtained the highest grade in my first-year legal research and writing course. During the recent summer months, I assisted Professor Tom Reynolds in the research, writing and editing of a scholarly paper discussing the Statute of Frauds in contract law. My experience and education has contributed to my preparation for a legal career and I welcome the opportunity to continue this development by working with Cran & Berry next summer.

I appreciate your consideration of the enclosed resume and would like the opportunity to learn more about your firm. I will be in the Rochester area from April 20th through April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and would be available to meet with you at that time. If another date is more convenient, please contact me at (305) 444-4242 and I will change my schedule accordingly. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Tara V. Goldstein

❖ **RETARGETING FIRM**

43 Hurricane Drive  
Coral Gables, Florida 33124

August 9, 2015

Nancy Jones, Esquire  
Smith & Jones  
1901 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1000  
Los Angeles, California 90067

Dear Ms. Jones:

I visited the office of Smith & Jones last fall and spoke with several members of the firm regarding a summer associate position. Unfortunately, at that time the firm was unable to offer me a position. Currently, I am a third-year student at the University of Miami School of Law, and I wish to explore the possibility of full-time employment with your firm commencing next fall. I am particularly interested in Smith & Jones due to the firm's substantial securities and finance practice, and would like to obtain a first-year associate position within that department.

My academic and professional experiences attest to my ability and desire to pursue a career in securities and finance. In my second year of law school, I took courses such as Securities Regulation and Corporate Finance. Last summer, I was an intern with the Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington, D.C., where I gained extensive exposure to federal securities laws and the inner workings of the SEC. I believe my experience has provided me with an excellent foundation to become an associate within the firm's securities and finance practice.

I understand that you will not be interviewing on campus this fall. However, I would very much like the opportunity to speak with you to schedule an interview. I can be reached at (954) 222-1212 or [wein44@hotmail.com](mailto:wein44@hotmail.com). Enclosed are copies of my resume and transcript for your review. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Jennifer N. Weinberg

❖ **RECENT GRADUATE-GOVERNMENT**

60 Serrano Way  
Miami, Florida 33133

May 17, 2015

Edward Norton, Esquire  
The Law Office of the Public Defender  
Broward County Courthouse  
201 S.E. 6th Street, Room 3872  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33301

Dear Mr. Norton:

I am writing to express my interest in an attorney position with the Broward County Public Defender's Office. Recently, I graduated from the University of Miami School of Law and plan to take the July 2013 Florida Bar Exam.

As the enclosed resume indicates, I served as a clinical intern for the Miami-Dade Office of the Public Defender. As a certified legal intern through the Florida Supreme Court, I gained valuable trial experience. For example, I defended several misdemeanor bench trials, and also assisted in a one-day jury trial by presenting the opening statement and cross-examining several witnesses. Last summer, I served as a judicial intern for Judge Ralph Cramden of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit. In that capacity, I prepared the weekly civil and criminal dockets and also drafted legal opinions for Judge Cramden's approval.

Due to my litigation experience and strong desire to pursue criminal defense work, I am confident that I would make a positive addition to your staff. Broward County is especially appealing to me because I have my family and close friends in the Fort Lauderdale area. I would appreciate an opportunity to interview with your office, and look forward to hearing from you. I can be reached at (954) 667-2345. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Anna Farrow

**❖ NETWORKING: REQUEST FOR AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW**

752 West Avenue  
Miami Beach, Florida 33149

March 23, 2016

Mary S. Clarke, Esquire  
Weeble & Wobble, P.A.  
123 Star Avenue  
Suite 4432  
Los Angeles, California 90000

Dear Ms. Clarke:

As a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law, I am interested in learning about legal practice in the areas of probate and guardianship. After conducting a Martindale-Hubbell search of alumni practicing in this area, I discovered your name and news articles about your career.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss what it means to practice in this particular area of law, and what career choices led to your successful practice. I can be reached at (305) 222-3333 or [ramirez@yahoo.com](mailto:ramirez@yahoo.com), and can arrange an appointment at most any time that is convenient for you. Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Alberto J. Ramirez

**❖ NETWORKING: REQUEST FOR AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW**

4532 Hurricane Drive  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

March 23, 2016

Ms. Mary S. Clarke  
Recruitment Coordinator  
Weeble & Wobble, P.A.  
123 Star Avenue  
Suite 4432  
Los Angeles, California 90000

Dear Ms. Clarke:

Professor Tom Jones suggested that I contact you regarding summer employment opportunities for first-year law students in the Los Angeles area. As a lifelong resident of California, I intend to return to Los Angeles each summer and permanently settle in the area upon graduation from the University of Miami School of Law in May 2018.

As an undergraduate, I majored in political science at Southwestern University and had the opportunity to serve as an intern with the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda. In addition, during my first semester in law school, I competed in the Jessup International Moot Court Competition. These experiences have heightened my interest in trial practice and my desire to work with a busy litigation firm.

I value your opinion regarding the best trial lawyers in the area, as well as your advice on those who might respond most favorably to summer employment inquiries. I welcome the opportunity to meet with you personally [speak with you on the phone] should you have the time. I can be reached at (310) 555-7777 or [jr23@hotmail.com](mailto:jr23@hotmail.com), and can arrange an appointment at most any time that is convenient for you. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

John Robinson

❖ **THANK YOU LETTER**

1234 Main Street  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

August 1, 2015

Ms. Myrtle Plain  
Recruiting Coordinator  
Cran & Berry  
22 East State Street, Suite 222  
Rochester, New York 11111

Dear Ms. Plain:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to interview with Cran & Berry yesterday. I enjoyed meeting with you and the various members of the firm, and appreciate the courtesy extended to me during my afternoon visit. Per your request, I have enclosed my writing sample and law school transcript.

The time I spent at Cran & Berry confirmed my desire to work for your firm. I believe that you will find my work and academic experience well suited for your present employment needs. As stated in my original application letter, your firm has an excellent reputation and I would consider it a privilege to work for Cran & Berry this coming summer. Please contact me at (305) 555-2222 should you need additional information.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane N. Doe

❖ **THANK YOU LETTER**

5678 Orange Drive  
Miami, Florida 33176

September 17, 2015

John A. Doe, Esquire  
Doe & Smith, P.A.  
123 Main Street  
Miami, Florida 33124

Dear Mr. Doe:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me yesterday afternoon. I remain extremely interested in an associate position with Doe & Smith.

Your firm is attractive to me because of its diverse areas of practice and congenial atmosphere. I found our conversation regarding the work assignments typically given to first-year associates particularly informative. After meeting with the head partners in the litigation, labor and real estate sections, I am confident that my skills and personality would provide a suitable match with Doe & Smith. I would feel privileged to join your firm.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional information. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ben N. Jerry

❖ **WITHDRAWAL FROM CONSIDERATION**

**(after interview but before offer)**

98 Samana Drive  
Miami, Florida 33131

December 10, 2015

Ms. Myrtle Plain  
Recruiting Coordinator  
Cran & Berry  
22 East State Street, Suite 222  
Rochester, New York 11111

Dear Ms. Plain:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with Cran & Berry.

At this time, I have decided to pursue other opportunities, and thus request that my name be withdrawn from consideration for a [summer associate, associate, law clerk, etc.] position.

I enjoyed meeting you and hope to have the pleasure of speaking with you again in the future.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Joshua Rosenblatt

cc: [Recruiting Coordinator or Hiring Partner–whichever individual was not the addressee]

❖ **SAMPLE EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE**

**(responding to a job posting)**

Subject: Application for Summer 2016 Law Clerk Position  
Attached: Cover Letter, Jason Smith Resume, Jason Smith Writing Sample

Dear Ms. Williams:

I am a second year student at the University of Miami School of Law and am applying for the summer 2016 law clerk position with Williams & Miller. Attached for your consideration are my cover letter, resume, and writing sample.

Sincerely,

Jason Smith

**[APPLICATION MATERIALS SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO THE EMAIL AS .PDF DOCUMENTS]**

Updated 8/2015