Professional Correspondence with Employers & Alumni

By Email:

* Use your Cornell email address
* Write a clear subject line: be specific and concise (e.g. Mechanical Engineer Intern Position Follow-up)
* Identify yourself as a Cornell student (if applicable; may not be needed if you have exchanged previous emails with the employer/alum)
* Use a formal salutation (e.g. Dear Mr./Ms., instead of “Hi” or “Hey”)
* Double check to make sure you spelled the recipient’s name correctly
* Avoid using colors, unusual fonts, excessive punctuation (!!!) and emoticons ☺
* Don’t use slang or informal language (e.g. im, ur, u, LOL, OMG, IDK, BTW)
* Use CAPITALIZATION (when appropriate) and punctuation
* Be concise in your message; if it’s too long/wordy, employers/alum won’t read it
* Use a formal closing (e.g. Sincerely; Best; Regards)
* Sign email with your full name
* Proofread your email before you hit send to catch any typos, and spelling or grammatical errors
* If including your resume, attach it as a PDF, do not copy and paste it into the body of the email, and label your resume clearly (e.g. JaneSmithResume.pdf)

note: even if the employer or alum is casual in an email, do not follow suit. wait until you have accepted the job and get to know the individual better before corresponding in a casual manner.

By Phone:

* Identify yourself and the specific job title of the position about which you are calling
* Have your schedule and resume in front of you
* If you need to leave a voicemail, speak slowly and clearly; state your phone number twice
* Return phone messages promptly
* Make sure you create a personal voicemail message where you state your full name (don’t use the default message that simply says your phone number, and don’t have background music)

Note: the examples below are sample text only. do not use them verbatim.

Requesting a Deadline Extension (If Deadline Is Within Cornell’s Job-offer Acceptance Guidelines):

Dear Ms. Robinson,

Thank you for the opportunity to work for Johnson & Johnson as a Biological Engineering Intern.  I am excited about this position and the potential of joining your team.

At the same time, this is a major decision and I want to make sure I have all the information I need to make the right choice.  I am asking you to consider extending my offer deadline by two weeks, until December 15.  I would be grateful if you could grant me such an extension, and assure you that I will be able to make a firm decision by that date.

Sincerely,

Sally Smith

Note: if you know that you will want a deadline extension, ask sooner rather than later. it is unprofessional to request an extension a day or two before the employer expects your decision.

Requesting A Deadline Extension (If Deadline Is Before Cornell’s Job-offer Acceptance Guidelines):

Dear Ms. Jones,

Thank you for the opportunity to work for Amazon Robotics as a Mechanical Engineering Intern.  I am most appreciative and excited about this position and the potential of joining your team.

I am writing to request a deadline extension until October 31, in accordance with Cornell University’s Job-Offer Acceptance Guidelines. I included the link in case you want to view the entire policy (<http://www.career.cornell.edu/employers/hiring_students/recruiting/upload/EmployerPolicies16-17.pdf>).

I would be grateful if you could grant me such an extension, and assure you that I will be able to make a firm decision by October 31.

Sincerely,

Michael Hernandez

Note: the deadlines change slightly each year; make sure to send the most current policy: **http://www.career.cornell.edu/employers/hiring\_students/recruiting/policies.cfm**

Things to Consider When Requesting An Offer Extension

* Date by which the employer wants you to make a decision (If it’s within Cornell’s Job-Offer Acceptance Guidelines, the employer may not be willing to extend the deadline; but it never hurts to ask as long as you make the request in a professional and timely manner).
* Why are you requesting an extension? Are you waiting to hear back from other employers? If so, realistically, how much time are you going to need to make a decision?
* How interested are you in the offer? Is it your top choice? If yes, why delay the decision?
* Are they offering you a monetary incentive to decide early?
* How will you respond if the employer isn’t willing to give you more time?
* Delaying an offer may not be realistic in some cases since engineering/technical firms recruit very early in the fall semester.

Request to Negotiate An Offer:

Note: negotiate the terms of an offer over the phone, not via email.

Dear Mr. Brown,

Thank you for the opportunity to work for Airbnb as a Software Engineer. I am excited about this position and the potential of joining your team.

I would like to schedule a phone call to discuss the terms of the offer. I am available on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of this week between 2-4 pm. If these suggested times do not work, please let me what days/times would be more convenient for you.

I appreciate your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Jane Wong

Accepting an Offer Verbally:

Note: some employers will require you to give a verbal accept before providing a formal offer letter. if you are serious about accepting the offer, and have already completed the negotiation process, you can verbally accept and follow-up with a confirmation email while you await the written letter.

Dear Mr. Kline,

Thank you for your offer to join Sandia National Laboratories as a Research & Development Electrical Engineer. As we discussed in our conversation today, I will begin my employment on August 1 at an annual salary of $80,500. I look forward to receiving the written offer letter with the terms we discussed.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Eva Perez

Accepting an Offer with a written offer:

Note: if an employer provides you with a written offer, and you want to accept it, follow the recruiter’s instructions on how to formally accept (e.g. via email or through the company website) by the designated deadline.

Dear Mr. Ramos,

It is with great excitement that I formally accept your offer to join 3M as a Product Development Engineer. Attached please find my signed offer letter.

Thank you again for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing you in July.

Sincerely,

Brandon Wu

Note: really think about the job offer before accepting. if you have any reservations, determine if accepting is the right decision. use the decision making workbook as a guide. once you have made a decision to accept, then you need to contact other employers and withdraw your applications.

Declining an Offer:

Dear Mr. Foster,

Thank you for offering me the Project Engineer position at Skanska. After carefully considering this opportunity, I have made a difficult decision to decline the offer. I have accepted a position that more closely aligns with my career interests and goals at this time.

It was a pleasuring meeting and speaking with you. I greatly appreciate your time and consideration, and would like to keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Ava Johnson

Requesting an Informational Interview Via LinkedIn Invite

Note: When requesting an informational interview via LinkedIn there is a character limit (300) so you need to be concise. We encourage you to make an appointment with an advisor in the engineering career center to talk about networking strategies before reaching out to contacts on LinkedIn.

Dear Ms. Regan, I am a sophomore studying Materials Science at Cornell and am interested in medical devices. I would like to learn more about career paths within this industry. Would you be willing to speak with me about your experience as an R&D Engineer at Boston Scientific? Sincerely, Mary Li

Requesting an Informational Interview Via Email

Note: When requesting an informational interview via email you can include some additional details as there is no word limit, but still keep your message brief.

Dear Ms. Levenson,

I am a junior at Cornell University studying Chemical Engineering. I am interested in learning more about how I can apply my technical skills and knowledge to the food and beverage industry.

I reviewed your LinkedIn profile and would love to know more about your day-to-day work as a Process Engineer at Mondelēz International. I would also be interested in hearing about your previous experience as a Regulatory Affairs Intern at Nestlé.

Would you be willing to have a brief conversation with me to talk about your career path and experiences as a Chemical Engineer?

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ninad Khan