

Following Up Post-Interview

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In the job search we find ourselves doing *everything* and *anything* possible to land an interview. **We figure that if we land the interview and it goes well, then if the job is meant to be, it will be.** However, even after you walk out of your interview, you continue to have the power to make an impact. How? Through the art of the thank you email. Here are some tips to keep in mind when you are ready to write yours.

➤ ***Send a thank you email within 24 hours after your interview.***

This way you are meeting the expectation of immediate follow-up and can remain fresh in the interviewer's mind. While thank you notes sent via USPS are not necessary, some job seekers insist on taking this step. If you choose to hand-write a thank you note, still be sure to send a short and sweet thank you email within 24 hours as the hand-written note may not arrive for a few days.

➤ ***Each interviewer should receive a different message.*** To make sure you take this extra step, be sure to get the business cards or contact information for each person before you leave. Immediately after you leave, sit down somewhere and jot down a couple of notes regarding the questions and conversations you had that connected you with each person. This will be your trigger to remember when you sit down to write them an email later.

➤ ***Keep your focus on saying thank you*** rather than overwhelming your readers with too much or new information about you.

Yes, use this opportunity to Always Be Closing (the good ol' ABC's), but do it in a subtle way that allows the reader to remember your manners and professionalism more than your wordiness and overselling.

➤ ***Proofread, proofread, proofread.***

If your cover letter and resume is the first impression employers have of you, your thank you note is potentially the last impression they'll have of you. Your writing needs to be impeccable and without error. I have a feeling that you called yourself detail-oriented at some point in this process—prove it with your written communications as these are the times to demonstrate that orientation!

➤ ***Keep your email pithy.*** There is no need to summarize the interview. Instead, thank the interviewers for their time, conversation, and consideration. No more than 6-8 sentences plus your greeting and closing, should be more than enough to leave a positive, lasting impression.

From the AAEE "Career Corner" weekly blog co-sponsored by *Education Week* and *TopSchoolJobs*, found at blogs.edweek.org/topschooljobs/careers/

How to Use Your Strengths to Land a Teaching Job

Posted by **Connie Rath**

Vice Chairwoman and Dean, Gallup Education

As a prospective teacher, you can distinguish yourself from a competitive applicant pool by understanding your own strengths and how to use them in the classroom to drive student achievement.

Here are three ways to use your strengths to secure a teaching position:

1. ***Evaluate your strengths.***

A common misconception among prospective teachers is that candidates with the best academic records are the top candidates for teaching positions. However, many of the top teachers—those who help students achieve gains each year—likely struggled with their own academic coursework. The best teachers help their students achieve by knowing their own strengths and how to apply them in the classroom. Knowing their strengths gives these teachers the confidence and personal insight they need to craft the optimal learning experience for their students each day.

2. ***Explain how your strengths will contribute to helping your students grow.***

The most attractive teaching candidates can clearly explain how their unique strengths help them meet their students' needs. If you have a strong drive for achievement, you can push a little more every day to find an additional way to help a student reach a new level of success. If you are a great relator, you can get to know your students and their interests so well that the students perform their best. If you are analytical, you may love to study data to diagnose what students need. If you excel by leading group discussions and taking charge of decisions, you can describe how you could manage a classroom more effectively than many other teachers. If you easily personalize attention with friends and coworkers, you can detail how you can individualize education for your students.

3. ***Set aggressive goals for yourself.***

Create a plan about how you can be a high-performing teacher. Review the students you have helped become successful and imagine how you can do that for 25 or 200 young people. Be clear about how you will measure student growth. Be ready to be your own performance manager, because you may not have a helpful principal or mentor.