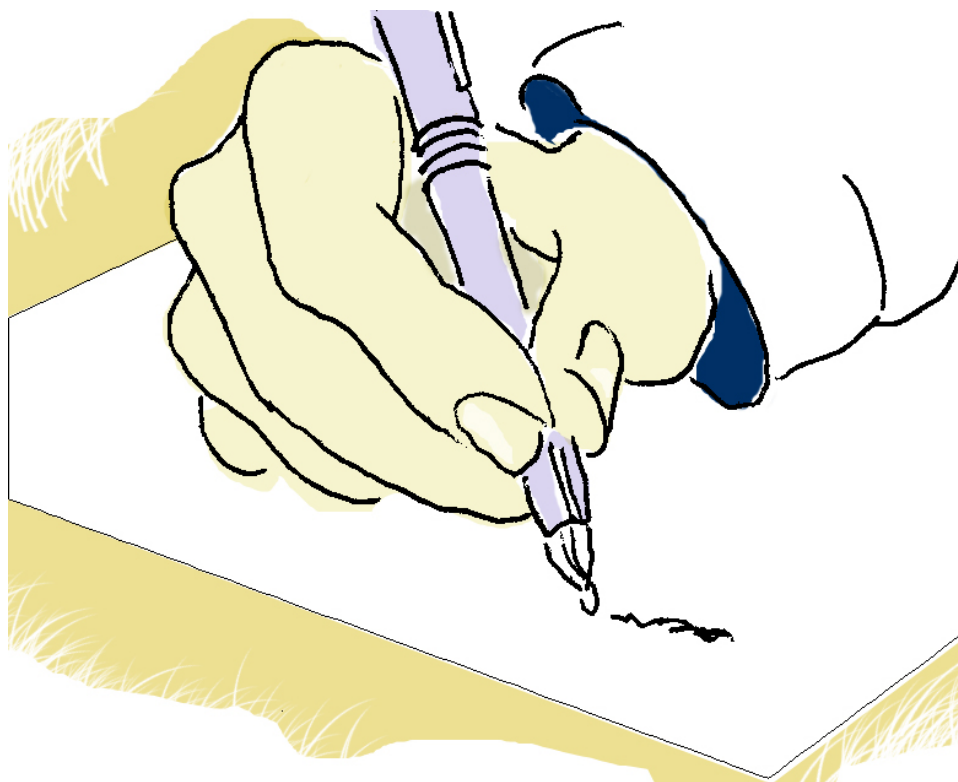


**A SHORT NOTE ON GRATITUDE ...
WRITING THE BUSINESS
THANK-YOU NOTE**



**Cynthia R. Grosso
Founder of
The Charleston School of Protocol and Etiquette**

Writing the Business Thank-You Note

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In addition to being an award winning speaker and a business columnist, Ms. Grosso has appeared as an etiquette expert on the Dr. Phil Show, Oprah, Faking It and Perfect Proposal reality shows on TLC. She has been written about in Woman's Day Magazine, Marie Claire Magazine, The New York Times, Esquire Magazine, BusinessWeek Magazine, Golf Digest, Working Woman Magazine, Women's World Magazine as well as many others. She has been published well over 100 times and is the author of an audio book and several e-books. She is the host of Your Manners Matter radio show.

Ms. Grosso is the author of the Professional Savvy Series, an on-line learning program for Professional Table Manners that is the only one of its kind in the world. This program won the bronze medal in the world for excellence in E-learning.

Ms. Grosso's credentials include certification from the Protocol School of Washington. Ms. Grosso is a graduate of the University of South Carolina with a BS degree in Business Administration. She is an award winning adjunct professor of business etiquette and protocol at several local colleges.

Ms. Grosso is active in professional and civic organizations and in 1999 received the prestigious "Business Person of the Year" award given by the Chamber of Commerce in her area. She has also received the Outstanding Young American Award for outstanding community service given by the United States Jaycees.

Ms. Grosso focuses on the critical ten percent... "the polish", needed for business people to compete and grow in the corporate environment. She speaks to people on an individual, group or corporate level.

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INTRODUCTION

“Thank you” are words that most of us love to hear and words I encourage people to use more often. People like to feel appreciated.

This book will address why to write, when to send, what to write on, what to say, how to place it in the envelope and how to address the envelope, etc. It is written in a concise, brief format, focusing on delivering information in an easy to use, quick reference guide.

Thank yous are often spoken, but many times not written. In our fast-paced society, many people think that a verbal thank you is enough; sometimes that is true...but not always.

According to an independent survey, on our site, CharlestonSchoolofProtocol.com for May of 2008, the survey question read:

In business, how important is writing a business thank-you note?

79% said that it was very important

17% said that it was important

2% said that it was somewhat important

2% said that it was not important

Many times writing a thank-you note will set you apart from the crowd. People appreciate being noted for their kind efforts.

Recipients remember this gesture and often save the thank-you note.

The tips in this book are designed to help you feel more at ease and help achieve your goal of establishing relationships.

*Source

<http://charlestonschoolofprotocol.com/topic.asp?pid=150>

PRE-QUIZ

1. How long should someone spend helping you before it is considered proper etiquette to thank them in writing?
 - A. 30 minutes
 - B. 1 hour
 - C. 15 minutes

2. A year-end bonus requires a thank-you note:
 - A. True
 - B. False

3. The paper a thank-you note is written on should be:
 - A. Good quality paper
 - B. A correspondence card
 - C. A fold-over note
 - D. All of the above

4. The thank-you note should have a:
 - A. Pre-printed thank-you on it
 - B. Hand-written thank you

5. The proper address on the outside is:
 - A. John Smith
 - B. Mr. John Smith

1. C, 2. B, 3. D, 4. B, 5. B.

TO WRITE OR NOT TO WRITE

The general rule on whether to write a thank-you note or not is: if you open the gift in front of the recipient and thank them in person, then a thank-you note is not a necessity. However, if the gift is sent to you or opened later, then you need to write a thank-you note.

In business, the general rule has been; if someone spends 15 minutes or longer helping you, then it is proper to send a thank-you note. However, even if someone spends five minutes or one minute with you, you may still send a note (See section on email thank you notes).

Always remember it is never wrong to send a note in addition to your verbal thanks. I always suggest to people to go the extra mile (there is not much traffic there) and put their gratitude into words.

Although a written thank-you note is not always required, it is a gracious gesture of appreciation and also one of thoughtfulness and kindness, especially in business.

WHY YOU WOULD WRITE ONE

In business, there are several reasons for sending thank-you notes. Some of them include receiving a personal gift, being taken to lunch, in response to a referral, when a co-worker or boss does a favor for you or after having a job interview.

Some additional reasons may be to a print or broadcast media journalist after an interview or story, after receipt of a company give-away, receiving tickets to a game, concert, event, etc.

Interestingly, a year-end bonus is not a personal gift. A bonus is earned and not a present from your employer. A verbal thank-you is all that is required. When in doubt, however, you may send a thank-you note.

Once again, if someone takes the time to help you, you may want to send them a thank-you note, depending on the time spent with you, it will be considered proper or at the very least a nice gesture.

Writing a thank-you note may be an excellent follow up to not only say thank you, but also to keep your name in front of them.

WHEN TO SEND ONE

Etiquette suggests, there are time frames to work toward when sending a thank-you note. Today we are moving faster than ever and time passes very quickly....too quickly. As a result, it is easy for the window of opportunity in which to write a thank-you note, to pass you by.

When sending a thank-you note, it is suggested to send the note within 24 hours, if possible. This is considered optimum timing.

However, sending a note 5-7 days after the event took place is also acceptable and more often, the norm.

Try to be aware of the time frame. However, if from time to time you miss it, it is my opinion, that it is better to send one late....than not at all. These days, people understand being busy, therefore, just apologize for the delay, letting them know that even though life is busy, you still appreciate their efforts.

On my site the following results were taken from a survey in August 2008 on thank you notes. *Survey question:

You sent a business gift to someone. You receive a thank you four weeks after it was delivered, are you....?

42% Said happy, as people are busy and it is never too late to say thank you.

5% Said they did not know there was an appropriate time frame in which a thank you note should be sent.

3% said not bothered, I did not expect people to send thank you notes anymore.

2% Said upset, as it is too long after the event to be receiving a thank you note and therefore, it must not have meant anything to the person writing the note.

*Source

<http://charlestonschoolofprotocol.com/topic.asp?pid=150>

HOW TO WRITE ONE

People are busy and often do not have time to read pages and pages. A thank you is typically brief...a few sentences is all that is necessary. A possible suggestion on the contents is:

1. Words of acknowledgement about the event
2. Words of thanks
3. Try to give a compliment (optional)
4. Positive words to end with

Try not to start off by saying “Thank you for.....” however, instead try something like...

“I enjoyed our lunch meeting on Thursday...Thank you for your thoughts on the project. You are always so creative! It was a pleasure seeing you and I look forward to talking with you on Wednesday.”

Or

“I enjoyed seeing you today. Thank you for the wonderful lunch... it was much needed time for us to discuss the project. I look forward to listening to more of your interesting ideas in the coming weeks.”

The note should be hand written and signed by the sender and not by his/her assistant.

WHAT TO WRITE ON

The paper that a thank-you note is written on is important. It should be good quality paper. The note may be written on a flat correspondence card, a fold-over card or personal stationery.

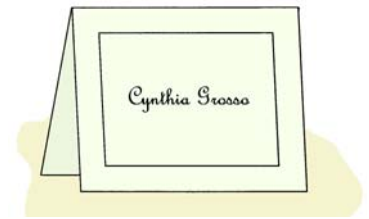


Thank-you stationery may be pre-printed with your name or your company name...or both.

A correspondence card for a man is a flat card. A woman, on the other hand, has the choice of a flat or fold over card.

If using a fold over store bought card, it may have a cover with a variety of scenes, there are really not limits on that, other than scenes that are in good taste. The inside however, is best left blank, giving you the opportunity to write your own note.

Most importantly, the thank-you note should not be a card that has a pre-printed "Thank-You" on it. Etiquette suggests, the words thank you are words you ought to hand write yourself.



WHAT ABOUT AN EMAIL THANK YOU NOTE

An email is my least favorite form of a thank-you note. A short time ago, I would have suggested not using email for thank-you notes. However, because email is so effective and efficient and has become the number one form of communication in the United States, it may be acceptable. The rule I recommend is that if your main source of communication with the person you are thanking is email, then it is acceptable.

Email in its nature of being brief and quick, has become very informal. Please remember however, the rules of proper grammar and correct spelling in business emails are very important....this extends to thank-you notes as well.

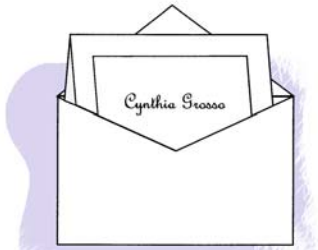
In my opinion, the best way to thank someone is still to take the time, and write a handwritten note. This note could be on a correspondence card, fold over note or personal stationery, and mailed by way of the US postal service.

HOW TO PLACE IT IN THE ENVELOPE



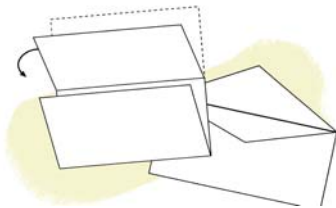
Once written, there is a proper way to place your note, card or letter into the envelope.

If using a flat card, place the card with the writing facing the back of the envelope.



If using a fold over note, place the card so the cover (the part with your name on it) faces the back of the envelope.

If using a store bought card, to write your note on, then the front of the card faces the back of the envelope, with the folded edge leading into the envelope.



If using a personal stationery letter, fold the bottom edge of the stationery up about one-third up the page.

Next, fold the top edge over the bottom fold, so the top edge now meets the bottom fold.

You have now divided the page into thirds.

Place the folded paper into the envelope, with the top fold facing the back of the envelope.

HOW TO ADDRESS IT

An important prelude to someone reading your thank-you note is a properly addressed envelope.



For example, the envelope may read John Smith....then the address. This is incorrect. The proper reference should be, Mr. John Smith. Always use the honorific or professional title when addressing an envelope.

Mr. John Smith
100 Anywhere Street
Somewhere, SC 12345

Dr. John Smith
100 Anywhere Street
Somewhere, SC 12345

If an address is two numbers, one for the house and one for the street, such as 100 10th Avenue; the proper way to write this address is:

100 Tenth Avenue

The first number is written in numeric form and the second number is spelled out. If the address is long, then all numbers can be used. If using numbers for the street, then it may have a “st”, “th”, “nd” or “rd” as in:

1st Street or 2nd Avenue or 3rd Street.

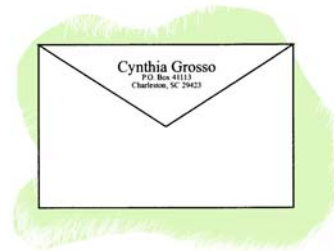
The city and state are next. The two letter state abbreviations may be used for business; then 2 spaces and the zip code. The zip code is actually the zip “plus 4”, although we often do not see it written this way:

Somewhere, SC 12345-1111

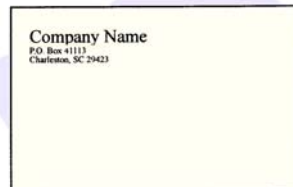
The envelope should not be typed or have an address label on it. The address is hand-written, in black ink.

THE RETURN ADDRESS

If the correspondence card is one with your name on it, then the envelope may have your return address printed on the back-side. Usually it is placed on the center of the flap.



If the correspondence card has your company name on it, then the return address is typically printed on the front of the envelope, on the top left corner.



IDEAS ON OTHER WAYS TO SAY THANK YOU

There are many ways to say thank you. Below are a few suggestions of some fun ways to express gratitude.

- I would like to “Expresso” my thanks – Starbucks gift card.
- Thank you for your genrosi-tea, hospitali-tea, or quaili-tea. Have one on me... Starbucks gift card....or come join me....for afternoon tea.
- With my compli-mints” - box of chocolate covered mints.
- Thank you a “brunch”...meet me for an early lunch.
- “Nuts” about your idea – gift box of nuts.
- “Godiva-in” – gift card at Godiva.
- Thanks for keeping your eye on the ball – golf passes or invitation to play golf.

Some additional ideas for thank-you gifts can be, dinner, lunch, wine, chocolates, plants, spa treatments, movie passes, theatre tickets and sports event tickets.

There are a host of ideas for ways to say thank you. However, a simple note may be enough.

Often, it is the little things that matter ...thank you makes the difference.

IS IT REALLY NECESSARY?

Hand-writing a thank-you note is something noticed and remembered.

Send thank-you notes to all who deserve it. You can ask someone to convey thanks for you in a note. However, if the person you want to thank is of equal status, send him/her a note as well.

Thank-you notes or letters make the receiver feel important that he/she is worthy enough for you to have taken the time and thanked them.



Writing a thank-you note can help build relationships and good will, which inevitably aids in your personal and professional success.

The words thank you are two words I encourage people to use more of in all areas of their lives... people like to be appreciated.

By writing thank-you notes to others for their efforts, you may be recognized for yours.