Various types of correspondence exist that you may use during your job search process. Although several different types of job search correspondence are presented below, keep in mind that all types should follow these basic business letter guidelines:

1. When writing a letter that will be sent in printed form, use the same high-quality paper for both your correspondence letter and for your résumé. Choose an 8 ½" X 11”, light paper with a smooth finish, typically white or off-white.
2. Use the same letterhead for your correspondence as you use on your résumé.
3. Always use a quality printer for your correspondence. Print on only one side of the paper.
4. All correspondence should be neat in appearance and pleasing to the eye.
   - Align all text on the left and center the letter vertically on the page.
   - Check for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and typographical errors.
   - It is always wise to ask someone else to proofread your documents. Remember, the letter is your personal representative.
5. Keep all correspondence brief, strategic, and relevant to the targeted position. This will ensure that you grasp and keep the employer’s interest.
6. Be sincere and polite.
7. Remember to sign your correspondence.

**COVER LETTERS** serve as an introduction to you and to your resume. Its goal is to spark the employer’s interest to want to learn more about you on your resume. You may wish to review Ready Reference F-2 for general cover letter tips and Ready Reference F-3 for a basic cover letter example.

The most common types of letters include:

**Letters of Inquiry** are written when inquiring as to the possibility for a position with an employer. Focus on broad occupational or organizational dimensions to describe how your qualifications match the work environments. See Ready Reference F-4 for an example.

**Letters of Application** are used when applying for a specific position. The purpose is to incite the reader to read your résumé, which may then generate an interview. As such, the letter should demonstrate that your skills meet the requirements and qualifications of the position. Ready Reference F-5 provides a sample of a letter of application.

**Networking Letters** are helpful tools in your job search. This type of correspondence is used when a contact, known by the employer, has recommended that you write. It may also be a letter to a person you may have met at a conference, meeting, or other venue. The networking letter can serve as an introduction, a request for an informational interview, or a letter to establish contact. In many cases, your résumé will not be included with a networking letter. See Ready Reference F-6 for an example.

All job search correspondence should be cordial and express appreciation. Remember that your correspondence is your written representative and often creates a lasting impression. Good letter-writing skills are essential and will benefit you throughout your professional life.
FOLLOW-UP LETTERS are used after a job search event, such as an interview, and include:

**Thank-You Letters** are sent as a professional courtesy and as a method of establishing communication and goodwill with a company or contact. Thank-you letters are one of the most important, yet one of the least used, tools in a job search. To whom should you write a thank-you letter? The basic rule of thumb is that anyone who helps you in any way should receive a thank-you letter. For example, they may be written following a Career Fair contact, after receiving assistance from a networking contact, in response to phone conversations or informational interviews, and for those who provided references. **Always send a thank-you letter within 24 hours of an interview.** In addition to thanking the interviewer for the time investment, a post-interview thank-you letter may also be used to provide additional information or to clarify a point from the interview. See Ready Reference F-7 for thank-you letter tips and an example.

**Letters of Acknowledgement** are sent to confirm an invitation or offer. In the case of a plant visit or informational interview, state what dates would be convenient. Do not delay sending these in order to make the best possible impression.

**Letters Acknowledging an Offer of Employment** are sent to acknowledge an offer of employment and to express your appreciation for the offer and the company's interest in you. Restate the title of the position and salary. Express your appreciation. Indicate the date you will notify the employer of your decision. Act on your decision, and notify the employer before that date.

**Letters of Refusal** would be written when you are declining an offer. Express appreciation for the offer and the employer's interest in you. Indicate that you have carefully considered the offer and have decided not to accept it. Be polite and positive. You may be corresponding with the same individual, or applying with the same employer, at a later date. See Ready Reference F-8 for an example.

**Letters Seeking Additional Information** may be written if you are awaiting an offer, or if you have received an offer but need additional information. Indicate your acceptance of the offer of employment. Indicate your interest in the employer. Be specific about the information or response you need. Express your appreciation for the cooperation you anticipate. See Ready Reference F-9 for a sample of a status inquiry letter used when awaiting an offer of employment.

**Letters of Acceptance** are written when you have received that perfect job offer. Indicate your acceptance of the offer of employment. Restate the position title, compensation offered, and the starting date, if established. Refer to the date of the original offer. Indicate your travel plans and arrival date if the position requires relocation. See Ready Reference F-10 for a sample letter of acceptance.

**Withdrawal Letters** are sent once you have accepted a position; you should inform other employers of your decision and withdraw your application from consideration. Other employers should be informed of your decision and necessity to withdraw your application from consideration. You may choose to state that your decision to accept employment with another organization was based on a better fit at this point in your career. Ready Reference F-11 provides a withdrawal letter example.