

Accepting the Job

Receiving a job offer should be the exciting outcome of the job search process. However there are still steps to think about before accepting a position. This handout reviews some topics to consider, including:

- Steps to accepting a job offer
- Questions to ask
- Weighing multiple offers
- Salary and benefits

Steps to Accepting a Job Offer

Congratulations on receiving a job offer! Below are some steps to accepting an offer.

1. Upon receiving the offer, be sure to thank the employer and express your gratitude, regardless of whether you plan to take the position or not. Even if you are sure you want to take the position, don't say yes right away – take time to think it through.
2. Ask how long you have to decide before you need to get back to the employer, and respect that deadline. This is especially important if you are waiting for another employer to get back to you.
3. If the employer doesn't already offer this, ask them to send you a copy of the offer letter. This should include information on things like salary and benefits, which are important to understand before you accept.

If you are excited about the position and want to accept, below is a sample email of what you can send an employer. If they ask you to reply via phone, you can use a similar same script.

Dear Ms. Rodriguez,

Thank you again for the opportunity to join XYZ company as a Management Trainee. I am excited to accept the position starting June 20th, 2015, and have attached a signed copy of my offer letter. Please let me know if you will need any additional information from me.

*Sincerely,
David*

Questions to ask

You should make sure that you research the company and position thoroughly before you apply and as you go through the interview process. However, you may still have questions before you accept an offer, or that will factor into your decision. Be sure to think through questions like:

- What will your daily schedule be?
- What will your commute be like?

If you are feeling unsure about an offer, write a pro/con list, and be sure to think about:

- What is my gut instinct when I think about accepting this position?
- What makes me unsure about the position?
- What makes me excited about the position?
- Is this position going to help me to reach my long term career goals?
- What would help me to feel more confident in accepting this position?

You should definitely let your Bottom Line advisor know if you received an offer, and talk through any concerns and next steps with them.

Declining an Offer

You may need to decline an offer, because the position isn't a good fit, or you receive another offer.

- If you decide to decline an offer, be sure to let the employer know as soon as possible.
- Don't accept an offer with the plan to turn it down later for a better offer.
- Don't accept an offer for a job that you don't want – this may mean that you have to continue job hunting, but it is best for you to accept jobs that you are excited about and can see yourself doing for at least a year.
- Don't apply to positions that you don't see yourself doing, or see yourself ultimately declining.

Every time you interact with an employer, you may be interacting with someone that you will work for or speak to again in the future. You want to maintain a positive relationship with hiring managers and avoid burning any bridges. Below is a sample email of how to decline an offer.

Dear Ms. Rodriguez,

Thank you again for the offer to join XYZ company as a Management Trainee. Unfortunately, I will need to decline the offer as I have accepted an offer with another organization. I appreciate the consideration and the opportunity to interview with XYZ. Best of luck in your candidate search.

*Sincerely,
David*

Weighing Multiple Job Offers

You may receive multiple job offers at the same time, or receive an offer while you are going through the interview process for a different position. If you want to check in with another company before accepting an offer:

- Ask employer A how long you have until you need to respond to their offer.
- Let employer B know that you have received an offer from another company, but that employer B is your first choice. Ask if they would be able to provide you with an update on your status in the application process, and let them know when you need to respond to employer A.
- Be professional, and understanding of company's hiring timelines. The hiring process doesn't always work on a perfect timeline. It is important to respond to employer A with an acceptance or decline within their deadline, and to know that if you have just begun the interview process with another company, they may not be able to expedite the hiring process.

Understanding Benefits

Be sure to read your offer letter and organizational policies, (if relevant) carefully. As you read it through, take note of any questions or concerns that you have. Your Bottom Line advisor can review it with you and help you to formulate questions for the employer before you accept.

Salary Negotiation

As you go through the job search process, it is important to do research to know what an average starting salary for the positions you are applying to, in your location. You can do this research by looking online (using websites such as www.salary.com or www.glassdoor.com) and speaking to professionals in your field. After doing this research, you should have a target figure in mind for your starting salary.

After receiving a salary offer, if you are interested in negotiating your salary you can ask the employer "Would you be open to negotiating my salary?" Certain roles, such as rotational programs, are not open to negotiation and some companies are not able to negotiate based on their budget. If a company is willing to negotiate, it is helpful to name a salary range based on your research and have specific reasons why you are interested in an increased salary, i.e. specific skills or experiences that you bring to the position.

If a company isn't able to negotiate your salary, you can ask if they would be open to negotiating other benefits, such as time off, flexible work arrangements, professional memberships, commuter benefits, or professional development funds. You can also ask for a review/evaluation of your work in six months (instead of the customary year) with the potential to increase your salary based on performance. Think about what you would like to negotiate beforehand in order to be prepared. Also keep in mind that you should only spend the time negotiating for a position that you are invested in accepting. Your Bottom Line advisor and professionals in your field can help you navigate the salary negotiation process.