OFFERS AND ACCEPTANCE OF EMPLOYMENT

Make every effort to avoid reneging on job offers. Before accepting an offer, gather information, ask plenty of questions, anticipate other offers and make contact with other companies who you are interviewing with to see if they would match or better the offer. If you need additional time try requesting an extension, all in an attempt to make an informed decision regarding an offer of employment.

You can ask for a reasonable amount of time to respond to an offer. Try suggesting a timeframe or asking the employer when they need a response. Tell them you want to make a responsible decision and would like a little time to review the offer. Unless the employer has asked you to keep the details of your offer confidential, you should talk over your decision with trusted advisors. This could be your family, a faculty member, definitely our Career Services staff. Be responsible about sharing salary information with other students. Other students may be offered different options and salary is only one part of the negotiation.

DO’S AND DON’TS

DO’S
* Do respond in a timely manner to employers when an offer of employment is extended
* Do ask for a written offer of employment
* Do let employers know whether you want to accept or decline their offer of employment
* Do send a letter of thank you even if you are declining an offer
* Do use an offer from one employer as an impetus to another interested employer to see if they can make a competitive offer
* Do consider your offer(s) carefully and talk with trusted advisors to guide you

DON’TS
* Don’t accept an offer from one employer while you are waiting for a better offer
* Don’t tell an employer you have another offer if you do not have one
* Don’t leave town or become unavailable without the hiring manager knowing how to reach you
* Don’t place unrealistic deadlines on employers for extending an offer

WHEN AND HOW TO NEGOTIATE

It is more of an exception than a common practice that an offer of employment will be extended in an actual interview however in rare cases when that occurs or it sounds like an offer has been extended, make sure you clarify your understanding “It sounds like you are offering me the position, is that correct?” If the answer is yes, then you can express your enthusiasm for the offer and ask the employer to put it in writing so you can make a careful decision. Companies rarely ask for a decision on the spot and if they do, it could be a red flag for a potential issue. However, if this is a 2nd or 3rd interview and you are certain you want to accept on the spot you can indicate your intent and let them know you will send a letter of acceptance when you receive your offer.

One of the biggest mistakes job seekers make is to try to negotiate before the purchase decision (a job offer) has been made. This usually results in a red flag to the employer. Are you more interested a paycheck than a career? You have more power if the hiring manager has made a decision and offered you a position. He or she has sold you to their corporation. There is a greater commitment to wanting you to accept the offer and more likelihood they will consider negotiating with you rather than starting the whole process over with someone else.

When an employer asks you for a salary expectation, make sure you have done your homework. Prior to your interview you should review sites such as http://www.salary.com for information about your field and your location. It is better to present a salary range rather than a specific figure. Keep in mind that a career with an organization is more than just a salary. Understand what type of benefits and perks may be available. (An employer who pays for continuing education may be a better option than one who pays more initially but doesn’t offer professional development.) What is the potential for growth and promotion? Will you have access to a career mentor or other professional development opportunities? Make sure any questions or requests represent a reasonable expectation. If you ask for a company plane when offered a first level position, you won’t make a strong impression.