



# HANDLING JOB OFFERS

**CONGRATULATIONS, YOU HAVE AN OFFER! FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN BEST RESPOND TO ACCEPT OR DECLINE AND STILL SOUND LIKE A SEASONED PROFESSIONAL.**

## How to respond to employers

You've made it through the application and interview stage, maybe attended an assessment centre, and you've finally heard some good news. Or is it really the news you want to hear?

## How to accept a job offer

It may sound obvious, but when you are offered a job you need to tell your employer that you accept their offer. Very often, the initial offer will be made over the phone and you should say clearly that you are happy to accept and thank them there and then. This will usually be followed by correspondence by email to cover the details of your start date, where you go and at what time, and what you should do when you arrive. You should also receive a contract to sign and return. If you are unsure about any details of the offer/contract or the practical arrangements, you should ask for details by email before you sign the contract.

## How to reject a job offer

If the job is not for you, once again make sure you thank the employer for their offer and say clearly that you do not wish to accept. They may ask for your reasons. This is a time to be honest and professional. If you've accepted another offer it is fine to say so and you may want to say briefly why, but you don't have to. Keep it concise and don't feel you need to apologise

for yourself – you are entitled to turn down offers. Turning down an offer will not spoil your chances if another job that you want to apply for comes up with the same organisation later.

## Tricky situations

What if you are offered a job while awaiting the result of another interview for a job you would rather have? This can be a very uncomfortable situation. There is no perfect answer to this dilemma. You can ask for time to think and hope the second offer comes good, although some employers like you to accept or reject straightaway and they won't wait long. You can slightly delay answering a written confirmation of the offer and returning the contract. You could try to contact the second employer and see if things can be speeded up although this is unlikely.

If you accept an offer and then withdraw you may damage your reputation and have to accept that an application to that organisation may not be welcomed for a few years. Acceptance is also a binding contract and although employers don't usually take any action in this situation, they are entitled to do so if they want. The best tip is to try and win some time to see how things develop. You are taking a risk but since you're going to interviews the chance of ending up unemployed is hopefully small.

If you're not sure about something, don't forget that you can get help from your careers service. **L**