

Receiving a Job Offer

Reviewing a job offer

A written job offer is a formal letter or email inviting you to accept a specific post. It should be from someone in authority, for example a Human Resources (HR) professional.

It should contain the following information:

- your name and the name of the employing organisation
- the date of the offer
- job title and department or location
- salary
- period of notice required for either party to end the contract
- the date you will start work (unless open to negotiation).

It may also give:

- hours of work
- holiday entitlement
- other information e.g. details of pension scheme, bonuses, salary reviews, other benefits such a
- company car, medical schemes, employee handbook with the organisation's rules.

...and may be conditional upon meeting specific criteria, for example:

- a satisfactory medical examination
- a specific class of degree
- acceptance of the offer by a given date
- completing a satisfactory probationary period.

Keep this letter or email safe, as it forms one half of your contract of employment. *

Seek clarification, by letter, email or telephone, of anything you do not understand or which you feel has been omitted. If you are concerned about any aspect of the job offer, contact Careers Network and ask to see a careers consultant for a Quick Advice appointment.

Making a decision

This checklist of questions may help you clarify what you need to know before you decide whether to accept an offer and, if you are in a dilemma, to sort out which factors are really important to you and how you genuinely feel about the job offer. This list is by no means exhaustive, and you'll probably have questions of your own.

Bear in mind that few people are in 100% 'ideal' jobs; that some jobs adapt to the people who take them; that a first job probably won't be a job for life; equally, a leap into a really unsuitable job could mean an unhappy experience and having to look for alternative positions.

The Job

- What will I actually be doing?
- What responsibilities will I have?
- How early will I assume these responsibilities?
- What deadlines will I be working to?
- What pressures will I be under?
- What intellectual challenges will the job offer me?
- What physical demands will there be?
- What values do I hold which may conflict with the job?

The Organisation

- How big/small is the organisation?
- How stable/profitable or successful?
- Is it expanding or contracting?
- Would I like to be associated with its products/services/values/ethos?
- Is it a 'rigid' organisation where job descriptions and status are clearly defined or is it a more 'fluid' organisation where jobs change and develop in relation to demand?

Working Conditions

- What hours will I expect to be working?
- What will my holiday entitlement be?
- Will I have the option to join a Union?
- Will the work involve unsocial hours or shift-work?
- Will the work involve travel and/or being away from home?

Salary

- How much will I earn?
- How much will I be paid after deductions?
- When will my salary first be reviewed? How often after that? On what basis? How is salary progression achieved?
- Are there any fringe benefits/subsistence allowances?
- What will my pension arrangements be?
- What will I earn in a few years' time?

Location

- Where is the job located?
- Where will I be able to live?
- How much will it cost to live there in terms of accommodation/upkeep/travel to and from work/parking?
- Are there any personal reasons which would make living there difficult?

Training

- Is there a structured training programme? If not, what support is offered?
- How long does the training last?
- Will further study be required? If so, who pays the fees and will I be allowed study leave?
- Will the training and study give me a professional qualification?

Career Development

- Will my career progression be dependent upon obtaining professional qualifications?
- Does the job have prospects for broader development rather than in one specialised direction?
- What happens if I am not successful in this field – can I change career direction?

Having weighed up this particular job offer you maybe have other pending job opportunities you want to consider before making a final decision. The biggest problem can be when the offer from company A arrives before even an interview date for the more attractive job/jobs with other companies. If this happens, it's not advisable to accept the offer from company A formally and later reject it for one you prefer (company B). Whatever your thoughts at this stage it's important to acknowledge, with thanks, the job offer from company A. If you need more time to consider it you may want to ask the employer for this. At the same time you could try to bring forward the interview date or result for company B while you continue to assess which job you would really prefer. Individual circumstances vary so much and you might find it useful to discuss your situation with a careers consultant at Careers Network.

Accepting an offer

Having made a decision to accept an offer of employment, write a letter or email along the following lines:

Dear (person making the offer)

I am writing to accept the position of (job title) offered to me in your letter of (date). I confirm my acceptance of the terms and conditions of employment outlined in your letter and look forward to starting work with (organisation) on (start date).

Yours sincerely

(Your name)

This letter/email constitutes the other half of your contract of employment – keep a copy and store it safely with the offer letter/email.*

Rejecting an offer

You will obviously think very carefully before rejecting an offer without something different or better on offer. If this is your decision however, then write a polite and grateful letter or email to the appropriate person, bearing in mind that your paths may cross again in the future! Send this as soon as possible so that the employer has time to offer the job to another good candidate.

Getting advice

Don't forget, if you have any queries about job offers which you would like to discuss, book with Careers Network to see a careers consultant. You could also make yourself aware of the information in the following useful links:

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/acceptance-and-rejection/275657-how-to-handle-job-offers>

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/acceptance-and-rejection/275661-juggling-more-than-one-job-offer>

<http://www.totaljobs.com/careers-advice/job-reference/conditional-job-offers>

<https://www.gov.uk/job-offers-your-rights>

Please note: nothing in these pages constitutes legal advice. Every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information but no responsibility can be taken for any errors or omissions.

Best of luck!