

CHAPTER 20

COMMUNICATING WITH POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS:

Letters – Forms – Decisions

How do I respond to all of the inquiries?

The secondary set of interviews are held at the organization's facilities where you are likely to be employed.

The evaluative process does not end after the initial interview. Your written communications begins. You want to look as professional as possible. The initial interview is normally followed by further interviews usually at the employer's facilities.

The *secondary interview* starts a series of further interviews with a number of different people employed in the department that has the actual job opening. Most employment decisions result only after a number of people discuss their opinions about you. Rarely does one person assume total responsibility for hiring. The secondary interview is also referred to as the plant visit, office visit, on-site interview, or call-back visit.

If the initial interview is at the employer's facilities, the second set of interviews may be conducted the same day. The current trend is for the initial interviewer to request that you return at a later date. The reason for the later visit is to ensure that all of the appropriate decision-makers are available.

After your successful initial interview, most employers will contact you by telephone, e-mail or letter requesting some specific dates.

Although many employers send turndown letters to applicants in whom they have no further interest, some employers do not do this. As a general rule, if the employer does not contact you within three weeks, little possibility for further consideration exists.



Employment Communications

Resume	Thank you for visit
Cover letter	Reaffirming interest
Thank you for interview	Still interested
Keeping in touch	Persistence
Application	Expense statement
Prodding	Terminating discussions
Confirming appointment	Offer
Dear John	Offer acknowledgment
The bullet	Offer stall
Delayed follow-up	Offer acceptance
Invitation to visit	Offer declination
Accepting invitation	Keep in touch (nudge)
Declining invitation	Notes on interview

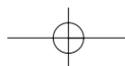
Figure 20.1

Professional Communications

You want to look professional in all of your employment communications. This chapter gives you the process and examples of communications you may receive and send.

The positive second contact from the employer prompts a detailed sequence of e-mails, letters, applications, expense forms, and other paperwork. Correspondence takes time.

Even though you are extremely busy interviewing other employers, visiting others, and trying to maintain a normal life, attendance to correspondence etiquette is imperative. One disgusted employer can blackball your chances with many other employers because a close working relationship among employers is very common.





Visual Impact Tools

Most letters look dull. You can spice them up a bit by clever graphical considerations. Your goal in doing this is to impress the reader with your attention to detail and to capture special attention to key points in your correspondence. The most commonly used visual impact tools are listed below:

- Vary two different type styles
- Use bullet points for emphasis
- Boldface (or underline) key words
- Employ an outline format
- Use numbered statements
- Select an off-white paper
- Select a high-quality paper
- Use business letterhead paper
- Underline key phrases
- Indent whole paragraphs
- Center top and side margins

Your goal is to deliver a message that will confirm, thank, or call for a follow-up action. Effective use of your visual impact tools increases the likelihood of your mission being accomplished.

The list of employment communications given in Figure 20.1 shows the scope and magnitude of the issue. As additional second interviews develop, work builds up rapidly. Since all avenues of employment have to be conducted simultaneously, it is not possible to follow through on one sequence before responding to others.

The time-consuming communication process can be moderated considerably by an advance plan. It is far more important to prepare for your secondary interviews than to spend time struggling with written communications. Put your communications on auto pilot with software as much as possible.

Employers use a standardized set of form letters for the purpose of contacting job applicants. Only minor changes are made in each letter when it is sent to applicants.

You should also prepare a set of semi-form letters to use in corresponding with potential employers. Of course, letters need to be slightly modified each time to fit individual circumstances.

Required Correspondence

A series of sample letters are included that may be used in contacting employers. The letters, however, represent only a small part of the total communication process. It is important to understand all communication from the perspectives of interviews, itineraries, and employment communications.





E-mail

E-mail has become the defacto standard in business communication, especially in larger firms. The content of various letters has not changed. E-mail style is much less formal but you cannot make a mistake by continuing to use the traditional styles used in formal letters from the past.

This book continues to show the formal style of business letter writing. Basically, e-mail eliminates the inside address and salutation. There should always be a closing address at the end of your e-mail. This is equivalent to letterhead. Most e-mail programs allow you to set-up your name, title, street address, city, state, zip, telephone, cell phone, e-mail/www, etc.

Unless specifically advised to use e-mail, you should assume that most employers still expect you to use a more formal style of letter writing. Some will be offended if you use the informal e-mail style. It is best to err on the side of business formality. No one will be offended.

Use your best judgment regarding your approach. Ask if e-mail is okay.

Interview Evaluation Record

The sequence of communication actually begins with the resume and cover letter. The initial interview is followed by an interview evaluation that serves as your personal estimate of future actions. Your job search may require over thirty interviews. Few candidates can remember the items discussed and the appropriate follow-ups without good written records.

If the response after the interview is positive, your "interview record" serves a very useful purpose in planning for future interviews. If the response is negative, your record and attached hypothetical evaluation serves to help your coaches figure out what went wrong. Interview records and evaluations should be kept on all interviews—initial and secondary. A sample format is given in Figure 20.2.

Some applicants prefer to maintain a file folder on each contact in the job search. What is your preference?

Letter Style

Business letter writing style is seldom taught in school. You may not have much experience in this form of communication. A universal format, style, and etiquette are accepted and used by nearly all organizations.

Each year a large number of job candidates alienate potential employers simply because they do not use appropriate business writing style. Professional communication ability remains a significant factor that employers use in evaluating and comparing applicants.

Figure 20.3 shows the style of a typical business letter. The blocking and spacing may vary slightly. Most people, regardless of the positions they hold, write hundreds of similarly styled letters during their careers.

Each letter must be individually typed and as error-free as the resume. Ideally, a letter should be written after each telephone call, e-mail or letter received to confirm your understanding of the situation.

Misunderstandings often occur because of the failure to follow up in writing. The employment topic is one that affects a person's entire working career, so attention to details is truly worth the small amount of extra time.

Evaluate yourself
after each inter-
view for follow-up
purposes.





Interview Record

What is the status of your discussions with potential employers? Maintaining a thorough record, like this, avoids potential embarrassment.

Company name _____ Date _____

Individual contacted _____

Address: _____

Position applied for _____

How initial contact was made: Campus Interview _____ Letter _____

Other _____

Comments on First Contact

Probable action by recruiter:

No interest _____

Uncertain _____

Is interested _____

Follow Up Procedures

Who will initiate next contact? They _____ Me _____

Date by which contact should be made _____

Nature of contact: _____

Actual date of follow-up contact _____

Nature of follow-up message: _____

Date consideration terminated _____

Reason consideration terminated (if self-initiated): _____

Have you attached your own completed version of the interview evaluation similar to the examples in Chapter 18? Your empathic evaluation helps your self-help analysis with your career coaches if you are rejected and maintains an important control factor in your successes.

Figure 20.2





Blacklist of Salutations

All professional business letters start with the salutation “Dear” followed by a colon (:) after the name of the person to whom the letter is directed. To have the impact intended, all business correspondence must be directed to a *specific person*.

Your employment correspondence is no different. You should never use “generic” salutations. The following salutations should be blacklisted in your employment letters. Never use any of them following the word “Dear” unless you add a last name after the title. Titles can never be “dear” to you.

- President
- Dean
- Chairperson
- Gentlemen
- Counselor
- Friends
- Personnel Manager
- Sir/Madam
- Committee
- Staff
- Professor
- Director
- Colleagues
- Any title

If you do not know the appropriate name, call the switchboard number of the organization and ask for the appropriate person’s full name.

If you cannot use a formal name, omit the salutation “Dear.” In this rare instance you might wish to use the memo format “To:” with the opening in lieu of a salutation. Another acceptable option is to omit the salutation entirely after you type the inside address.

Always keep a copy of every letter sent because it may save later embarrassment. If correspondence is lost in the mail, showing an irritated potential employer the copy may save a job offer.

The importance of proper communication cannot be overemphasized. Written communication is the backbone of every human resource office. A good succession of communication shows the employer that you sincerely want the job. A high level of interest shown by your follow-through can swing the decision your way even though another candidate may have a slightly stronger record.





Typical Business Letter Style

Street Address
City, State, Zip
Telephone number
e-mail
Current Date

[4 spaces]

Employer's Name
Title
Department
Organization
Street Address
City, State, Zip

[1 space]

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Individual's Last Name:

[1 space]

Introduction: Reference previous conversation or correspondence . . . give specific dates if possible . . . state appreciation for past consideration . . . succinctly state current business.

[1 space]

Body: Give details on purpose of letter . . . make reference to attachments . . . write short but complete sentences . . . avoid large and unnecessary words . . . cover the central theme completely . . . make paragraphs two to five sentences.

[1 space]

Close: State the action you expect from the recipient . . . keep paragraph short . . . indicate your next plan of action . . . offer specific date of expected action if appropriate . . . thank the recipient.

[1 space]

Very truly yours, [Sincerely, Sincerely yours, Truly yours, etc.]

[3 spaces]

Signed Name
Typed Name

[1 space]

P.S. [Information that came after the letter was written. Sometimes used for emphasis.]

[1 space]

Encl. [Indicates that there is an attachment or enclosure]

[1 space]

cc: Career Services Office [Indicates others who are kept informed]

Figure 20.3





Follow-Up Phrases

A number of phrases frequently are repeated in business correspondence. You will find many of these phrases that tie together events, circumstances, qualifications, and actions used in the many illustrated examples.

Most people use a word processor software package to mail all of the required employment correspondence. You will probably put your unique version of your standard replies into your own word processor document files. All you will then need to do is to call up the appropriate letters, make minor changes, retype the inside address, and mail.

In constructing your various letters, you might wish to incorporate some of the preferred follow-up phrases listed below.

- Upon reflection . . .
- Recognize the importance of . . .
- Listening to your advice on . . .
- Impressed with . . .
- Enthusied and excited about . . .
- Confident about . . .
- Interested in . . .
- Appreciative of . . .
- Qualifications are . . .
- Important qualities of . . .
- Expect a positive reply soon . . .
- Thank you for . . .
- Contact me if . . .
- However, please consider . . .
- Look forward to hearing . . .
- In reference to . . .
- Enclosures include . . .
- Time and interest . . .
- Please . . .

Employers make ample use of word processing. Given the limited time available during an intense job search campaign, you may also wish to handle much of the processing details in advance. Incorporating some of the follow-up phrases into your letters makes excellent use of your limited time.

Thank You

A thank-you letter after every initial interview is not necessary, but in certain instances where interest is very high, it is appropriate to send a follow-up. A thank-you letter simply restates your interest in a job with the organization. It cannot harm you.

In some instances, thank-you letters serve another purpose. Some employers fail to respond expeditiously to job candidates and need a nudge.





The “nudge” letter is sent under the guise of a thank you about four to six weeks after the initial interview.

A polite way to nudge the employer to act is to enclose an updated resume or to comment about any new developments since the initial interview. Another approach is to say that another employer is pressing you. The follow-up says: “I’m still interested and I want to hear from you.”

Application Forms

Every employer demands that you complete the organization’s official application blank. Many can be completed on-line. Even if your resume contains the same information, an application is required for legal, data processing, and employer convenience reasons.

Official Document. The application is an official document. The information must be complete and accurate. If the blanks are inadequate for a certain situation, explain the situation on an attached page.

The application often follows employees for years. Career progress decisions are made on the basis of information contained in applications which may be several years old. Employers tend to update applications by placing promotions, salary progress, and appraisals into the employee’s personal file. Thus, a well-completed initial application is in your best interest.

Everyone enjoys reading a document that is free of errors and smudges, neat, typed, centered, and complete. Typing application blanks is not always possible, but if time is available, you should do it. The form is often copied and widely circulated internally; a typed form makes a more pleasing representation.

Salary Data. If you have no significant work experience related to the sought-after assignment, the “salary desired” blank may be left open. For candidates with work experience and/or a minimum acceptable salary, the minimum should be specified. If the employer cannot meet the minimum, an offer is unlikely, so both parties can save much time.

Almost no employers negotiate on entry-level salaries; attempts to negotiate most often are met with offer withdrawals, so be prepared to lose the offer if you decide to haggle. The following websites will give you some basic salary information.

www.salary.com
www.salaryexpert.com
www.jobweb.org
www.careeronestop.org

Accepting Invitation

After expressing your appreciation for the opportunity to visit the employer’s facilities and his or her further interest, you should suggest three convenient dates, in most preferable order, for your visit. This is often done via telephone or e-mail.



APPLICATION FORM

Please complete this personal data sheet. Either present it to the interviewer or mail to the office.

Personal: If Employed, This Becomes A Part Of Your Permanent Record.

Name _____
LAST (Please Print) FIRST MIDDLE NICKNAME

Present Address _____
NO. and STREET CITY STATE ZIP (AREA CODE) TELEPHONE

Permanent Address _____
NO. and STREET CITY STATE ZIP (AREA CODE) TELEPHONE

Social Security No. ____/____/____ If not a citizen of U.S. indicate type of VISA _____

Have you ever been refused or do you have any reason to believe you might be refused an application for a fidelity bond?
 Yes No (If YES, explain in Comments Section)

Education: Scholastic Record To Date (Estimate if not known)

High School	Undergraduate	Graduate					
NAME _____	UNIVERSITY _____	UNIVERSITY _____					
CITY AND STATE _____	CITY AND STATE _____	CITY AND STATE _____					
I stood number _____ scholastically in a class of _____, or estimate that I stood in the top 10% <input type="checkbox"/> 25% <input type="checkbox"/> 50% <input type="checkbox"/> 75% <input type="checkbox"/>	FROM _____ TO _____ ATTENDED	FROM _____ TO _____ ATTENDED					
COLLEGE BOARD S.A.T. SCORES Verbal _____ Math _____ <small>(200-800) (200-800)</small> English _____ Math _____ Composite _____ <small>(1-34) (1-36) (1-35)</small>	Degree _____ Mo. & Yr. of Grad. _____ Concentration or Major _____ GRADE POINT AVERAGES— Overall _____ Major _____ Minor _____ Grade point equivalent of "A" _____	Degree _____ Mo. & Yr. of Grad. _____ Concentration or Major _____ GRADE POINT AVERAGES— Overall _____ Major _____ Minor _____ Grade point equivalent of "A" _____					
Insert in the appropriate boxes the number of hours of college credits, broken down by grades and subjects as indicated. Use latest degree only.	NUMBER OF HOURS			NUMBER OF HOURS			
	GRADES	Major	Minor	All Other	Major	Minor	All Other
	A						
	B						
	C						
D or Lower							
Unit of Hours	Semester <input type="checkbox"/> or Quarter <input type="checkbox"/>			Semester <input type="checkbox"/> or Quarter <input type="checkbox"/>			

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS TAKEN UPON COMPLETION OF FINAL DEGREE _____
 APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK OF OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT DURING LAST ACADEMIC YEAR _____

TEST RESULTS, IF TAKEN — Graduate Management Admissions Test— VERBAL _____ QUANTITATIVE _____ TOTAL _____ <small>(0-60) (0-60) (200-800)</small> Law School Admission Tests— LSAT _____ <small>(10-48)</small>	LIST UP TO 5 COMPUTER COURSES AND GRADES (If < 5, list last 5) _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
--	--

SCHOLARSHIPS _____

HONORS: Beta Alpha Psi Beta Gamma Sigma Phi Beta Kappa Tau Beta Pi Other _____

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (e.g., class organizations, athletics, publications):
 COLLEGE _____
 HIGH SCHOOL _____



Position Interests:

Have you previously applied to our firm for a position? YES NO If YES, _____ Year _____ and _____ Office

Do you now have any employment commitment with another firm or company? YES NO (If YES, explain in Comments Section)

Location Preference—Our firm representatives are seeking qualified personnel for many offices of our firm. Our office locations are listed in our employment brochure. Please indicate your location preferences below:

1st Choice _____ 2nd Choice _____ 3rd Choice _____

Who referred you to us? _____

Starting salary expected _____

Employment Record:

SPECIFICS →	LAST OR PRESENT POSITION	NEXT PREVIOUS POSITION	NEXT PREVIOUS POSITION
EMPLOYER →			
ADDRESS →			
NATURE OF DUTIES →			
NAME AND/OR TITLE OF IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR →			
PERIOD-MONTH & YEAR →	FROM _____ TO _____	FROM _____ TO _____	FROM _____ TO _____
FINAL MONTHLY SALARY →			
DISCHARGED OR ASKED TO RESIGN →	NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/>
MAY WE CONTACT EMPLOYER →	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

References: (Do not include former employers, relatives, or more than one member of college faculty)

NAME	MAILING ADDRESS	TITLE OR OCCUPATION	YEARS KNOWN
1.			
2.			
3.			

Comments: Use this space for any further explanation or information you wish to supply.

If employed, I agree to provide copies of official university transcript(s) or equivalent(s) and a copy of my diploma(s). I understand that you will conduct a routine inquiry into my general character, reputation, and mode of living. Upon written request, I can obtain further information about the nature and scope of this inquiry.

All representations by me on this data sheet are to the best of my knowledge and belief true and correct, and I have not knowingly omitted any related information of an adverse nature.

Date _____ Signature _____

Please attach unofficial transcript (or course/grade listing) with this application.
We Are An Equal Employment Opportunity Firm





COLLEGE GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

An Equal Opportunity Employer

TYPE OR USE BLACK INK

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	DATE AVAILABLE TO BEGIN
<u>PRESENT MAIL ADDRESS</u> NO. AND STREET		CITY	STATE	ZIP
<u>PERMANENT MAIL ADDRESS</u> NO. AND STREET		CITY	STATE	ZIP
PHONE: AREA CODE & NO.		PHONE: AREA CODE & NO.		

SCHOOL	DATES ATTENDED (Month & Year)		GRADUATION DATE	DEGREES	MAJOR	MINOR	Cumulative G.P.A.	Out of a Possible	CLASS STANDING (e.g., Top 1%)
	FROM	TO							
PRESENT COLLEGE									
PREVIOUS COLLEGE									

DID YOU RECEIVE ANY SCHOLARSHIPS? NO ___ YES ___
 IF "YES," DESCRIBE: _____

ARE (WERE) YOU A MEMBER OF ANY HONORARY GROUP(S)? NO ___ YES ___
 IF "YES," NAME: _____

SIGNIFICANT MEMBERSHIPS IN AND OFFICES HELD DURING COLLEGE (EXPLAIN AND INDICATE YEAR):

DID YOU WORK PART TIME DURING COLLEGE YEARS? NO ___ YES ___; IF "YES," HOW MANY HOURS PER WEEK? _____
 PERCENT OF SCHOOL EXPENSES EARNED? _____%

LIST WORK EXPERIENCE, FULL OR PART TIME (MOST RECENT FIRST), INCLUDING MILITARY:

EMPLOYER	LOCATION	PRODUCT/SERVICE	PRINCIPLE DUTIES	DATES	HRS./WK

NUMBER YOUR PRIMARY FIELDS OF INTEREST, IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE (NO MORE THAN 2):

<input type="checkbox"/> Finance	<input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing	<input type="checkbox"/> Plant Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Product Engineering
<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Production Control	<input type="checkbox"/> Production Supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific Research
<input type="checkbox"/> Quality Control	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales/Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/> Operations Research	<input type="checkbox"/> Other; Explain: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Programming	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Relations		

DO YOU HAVE A STRONG GEOGRAPHIC PREFERENCE? NO ___ YES ___; IF "YES," WHERE? _____

ARE YOU WILLING TO TRAVEL IN CONNECTION WITH WORK ASSIGNMENTS? NO ___ YES ___
 IF "YES," HOW MANY DAYS PER WEEK? _____

IF YOU FEEL ADDITIONAL COMMENTS WILL HELP IN EVALUATING YOUR APPLICATION, PLEASE ATTACH SEPARATE SHEET.

ARE YOU MAILING THIS APPLICATION AS THE RESULT OF AN INTERVIEW WITH A COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE? NO ___ YES ___
 IF "YES," WHEN (MONTH AND YEAR) _____ WHERE _____

I UNDERSTAND THAT I SHALL NOT BECOME AN EMPLOYEE OF THE COMPANY OR ANY OF ITS SUBSIDIARIES UNTIL I HAVE SIGNED AN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE FINAL APPROVAL OF THE EMPLOYER AND THAT SUCH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SUBJECT TO VERIFICATION OF PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT, DATA PROVIDED IN MY APPLICATION, AND ANY RELATED DOCUMENTS OR RESUME, AND WILL BE CONTINGENT ON MY SATISFACTORILY PASSING A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION REQUIRED BY THE EMPLOYER. I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT A REPORT MAY BE MADE WHICH WILL INCLUDE APPLICABLE INFORMATION CONCERNING MY CHARACTER, HEALTH, GENERAL REPUTATION, PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS, AND MODE OF LIVING, AND THAT I CAN MAKE A WRITTEN REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE REPORT IF ONE IS MADE.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____



PERSONAL INFORMATION EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

An Equal Opportunity Employer

PLEASE USE BLACK INK OR TYPEWRITER

Name _____ Social Security No. _____
 Last First Middle Initial
 PRESENT mailing address, Street _____ Phone: Area _____ No. _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
 PERMANENT address where you can always be reached. Street _____ Phone: Area _____ No. _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Today's Date _____ Dates available for pre-employment visits _____ Date ready for work _____
 Height _____ Weight _____ Do you have or expect to have in the near future any family or other responsibilities which would prohibit or interfere with traveling from one location to another or meeting other demands of employment? No _____ Yes _____ If Yes, explain _____

Have you had or do you now have any physical or mental health problems such as tuberculosis; epilepsy; fainting spells; hernia; nervous, mental, or emotional diseases/trouble; diabetes; back ailments; heart condition; amputations; limitations in sight, speech, hearing, or limb; or any other physical/mental health problems? No _____ Yes _____ If Yes, explain _____

High School List all colleges and universities and other educational institutions attended, including military service schools, in chronological order.	Degree	Major	Minor	City	State	Graduation Date	Class Standing; e.g., Top 1/10, 1/4, 1/2; or 25/80	Attendance From To (Mo./Yr.) (Mo./Yr.)	Anticipated or Actual Graduation (Mo./Yr.)

List advanced courses in major _____
 Languages spoken fluently _____
 List college grade point average for each year (not cumulative): 1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____ 4th _____ 5th _____ 6th _____
 Future education plans (part-time, full-time, type of degree) _____

Honors, Awards, Scholarships _____
 Athletics _____
 Organizations and Offices Held _____
 Outside Interests and Hobbies _____

List chronologically all work—full-time, military, summer, cooperative, and part-time.

From (Mo./Yr.)	To (Mo./Yr.)	Employing Organization & Location	Describe Duties	Hrs./Wk.

Present reserve or draft status (military only) _____
 Branch of U.S. Service _____ Active duty: requested _____ ordered _____; fulfilled—Mo./Yr. _____ to Mo./Yr. _____ Highest rank _____
 Significant achievements/awards while in military service _____

Career areas of greatest interest (such as engineering, manufacturing, finance, marketing, etc.): _____
 Specific work interests (such as sales, engineering, quality control, cost accounting, etc.) in order of preference:
 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 Product or business areas of interest _____
 Geographic interest: None _____ Prefer to work in/near _____ Must work in/near _____

If you have previously discussed employment or corresponded with anyone in our company, please give individual's name, location, and approximate date. _____

Professor with whom we may communicate for additional information _____ Dept. _____ School _____



Invitation

The confirmation letter or e-mail should be written even if it is only a formality to confirm the dates agreed upon by telephone. It is an embarrassing situation for both the employer and candidate for you to arrive and find no itinerary arranged.

You should determine with the employer whether overnight accommodations are necessary. If so, it is best to request that the employer make hotel reservations nearby. Advising the employer of your travel plans and time of arrival is standard courtesy.

www.travelocity.com
www.expedia.com

Not all employers pay expenses for the secondary interview although most of them do. Be prepared to assume the total cost. Call or e-mail the employer if there are any doubts as to the cost arrangement.

The employer must be notified immediately if changes occur or last-minute emergencies develop. The employer has likely developed a schedule for executives to interview you, which must be changed.

Declining Invitation

If you decide that your interests lie elsewhere, thank the employer for the consideration he or she has displayed and state that you have made other career plans. Never ignore an invitation letter. A response, one way or another, is essential within three days. Never burn your bridges.

Reaffirming Interest

After the visit to the employer's offices, a brief note indicating your continued interest should be sent. The expense statement is usually attached and other





details of the visit are discussed. The letter should always express thanks and appreciation.

It is common to enclose your expense report in this letter and to indicate that you are enclosing any other information that your interviewers might have requested.

Expense Statements

Many times an employer will request an expense voucher before reimbursing expense money. This could be included in the letter reaffirming your interest. In many cases, the employer refunds expenses at the end of the day of the visit. If the employer does not provide a form for you to complete, the one given in Figure 20.5 is acceptable. Remember that not all employers pay expenses. Use a facsimile of this Expense Report if the employer does not provide a copy. Save a copy for your records.

An effective job campaign can easily cost \$1,000 to \$3,000 including resumes, letters, travel, counseling, special services, assessment tests, and moving expenses. It is an expenditure you should plan for well in advance.

Never pad an expense account. Illegal and unethical conduct is unacceptable. Employers pay expenses day in and day out and know what reasonable costs are. A blackballing letter from an employer to other potential employers could be extremely damaging to you.

Terminating Discussions

If after the visit you determine that you have no further interest in pursuing that employment, advise the employer immediately.

The employer should be thanked for the consideration shown you, and you should state that you have made other plans. This should be done as soon as you decide so that the employer can extend an offer to someone else.

Offer Acknowledgment

After receiving an offer, written or verbal, an immediate acknowledgment of the offer should be made. Thank the employer for the interest shown and discuss your understanding of the terms (salary, job title, duties, etc.) of the offer.

The employer is aware that you may have other irons in the fire; it is proper, therefore, to indicate the date by which you will make a decision. If that date comes and you need more time, an extension can be requested. It must be remembered, however, that an employer has the right to withdraw the offer *any time* prior to its acceptance.

Some employers extend more offers than there are job openings available, and when the first person accepts, they withdraw other offers still outstanding. Most employers, however, will hold an offer open until the date mutually agreed upon.

Acceptance of an Offer

This letter constitutes a contract between you and the employer. An acceptance should again include the terms and conditions. Also, such items as the





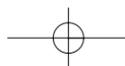
Guide for Preparation of Expense Report

Your submissions are part of your selection evaluation.

When you are invited to visit the organization or one of its sales offices more than 50 miles from your present address, you will usually (but not always) be reimbursed for expenses involved in making the trip. Reimbursement is intended to cover actual expenses required to complete the interview. Expenditures for entertainment, tours, and other personal activities may not be included. When a visitor elects to visit other firms on the same trip, it is expected that expenses will be prorated among the organizations.

1. **Receipts Required:** Receipts for lodging and commercial transportation will be required before reimbursement can be made in accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.
2. **Transportation:** In order to reduce time away from campus or job, interviewee may select the most convenient means of transportation (air or rail). Use of private automobile via most direct route will be reimbursed at the current rate per mile. Automobile travel is not recommended if the round trip is over 400 miles. Car rentals are not often permitted unless authorized in advance.
3. **Hotel-Motel:** Many visits to plants or sales offices may require one overnight stay. Occasionally, where transportation difficulties arise, a second night's lodging may be approved. Only charges for room rent will be reimbursed.
4. **Meals:** Reasonable meal expenses will be approved. Meal charges should include meal, sales tax, and tip. No alcohol.
5. **Local Transportation:** Include airport limousine service, buses, local or suburban trains and taxis with reasonable tips where appropriate.
6. **The Following Items Are Not Reimbursable:**
 - Entertainment, tours, cigarettes, magazines, alcohol, etc.
 - Excessive tips, personal phone calls unless for emergencies
 - Valet expenses
 - Expenses for persons other than individual interviewee
 - Car rental (unless authorized by in advance)
 - Stopover other than at point of interview unless required by transportation
 - Charges for uncancelled transportation reservations and change fees
 - Travel insurance
7. **Read the sample "Interview Trip Expense Report" format**

Is your expense report a reflection of your character?





Job Decision Ethics

- Honor dates for reply
- Keep your word
- Explain decision difficulties
- Never burn bridges
- Leave doors open
- Write thank you to everyone
- Put everything in writing
- Never renege on commitments

Figure 20.4

drug screen, physical examination (if required), reporting date, and perhaps home-hunting plans, should be discussed.

Of course, you can accept only one offer, and the decision is a binding commitment. If a more attractive offer comes at a later time, you must reject it on ethical grounds. The decision to accept should not be taken lightly or done in haste.

If undue pressure to make a decision is exerted by a given employer, do not buckle under if you have other hot irons in the fire. In the final analysis, the decision to accept or reject an offer is your decision, but advice from others always helps.

It is seldom possible for you to collect all potential offers and make a decision after they are all in. Both you and the employer must make decisions in a chronological sequence.

When you turn down an offer, the employer must have enough time left to extend the offer to another applicant. Time can be critical for both parties. Two weeks from offer to acceptance is normal.

Rejection of an Offer

As soon as you have made a decision to accept a job, immediately notify all other employers of that fact. You should simply advise them that this was a difficult decision but that another employer's opportunities fit better in line with your interests and aspirations.

It is proper to indicate where employment was accepted, but it is not necessary. By courteously thanking them for their interest, you keep the doors open for the future.

Never burn your bridges to the future! Stay in touch. This employer may become part of your long-term network partnership.

The Secondary Interview

An understanding of what to expect at your secondary interview contributes to your ability to communicate well. Each situation may need to be handled differently, but understanding a pattern helps greatly.

Flexibility in your itinerary is a standard procedure. Upon arrival, you usually report to the HR department to learn of the plans for the day. The individual to whom you report may or may not be the interviewer you met previously. Personnel's role normally is that of a liaison. The following points may be discussed.

- Outline for the day's activities.
- Organization structure.
- General employment procedures and guidelines.
- Answers to your general questions.





Interview Trip Expense Report

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

Date of Visit _____

Transportation:

 From home to airport _____

 Airline fare (receipt attached) _____

 From airport to home _____

 Taxi/Limousine fares _____

Lodging

 Hotel () (Receipt attached) _____

 Hotel tips _____

Meals

 Meals prior to interview _____

 Meals en route home _____

TOTAL EXPENSES INCURRED _____

Signature _____

Figure 20.5





Stalling Techniques

How can I get more time to make my job decision?

It would be ideal if you could set a date upon which all of your many job offers would arrive simultaneously. On this pleasant date you could review all of your offers, analyze their pros and cons, and then come to an optimal decision.

Unfortunately, reality does not work that way. Your offers arrive over time, and you usually receive two to three weeks' time in which to make a decision. Out of necessity, your decisions must be "rolling" decisions.

Most employers will try to make you an offer about two to three weeks before a date that you name. It requires a considerable amount of coordination of first and second interviews to make your offers arrive simultaneously.

In most cases you will have to make some of your offer decisions before others arrive. This means you must have confidence that a better offer will arrive later if you reject an offer.

Your goal is to evaluate offers against a firm set of criteria that you have established. Rarely can you evaluate offers against each other.

There are some stalling techniques that you can employ that will aid you in planning so that your offers will arrive within your specified "window of opportunity."

These techniques involve calling or writing (preferably writing) each employer explaining your situation and requesting an extension. The most accepted reasons for requesting "only two weeks extension" include:

- Pressing commitments
- Major exams
- Class projects
- Business travel
- Further job details
- Geography concerns
- Consult family
- Consult others
- Work commitments
- Personal plans
- Spouse employment
- Promise to others

Many organizations will need your services immediately unless you are moving into a training program. Others will press you by indicating that they must make an offer to a back-up candidate, which they will lose if a delay is granted. Extensions are possible for up to a couple of weeks, but often the employer simply cannot grant extensions and risk losing the back-up candidates.

It is unethical to accept an offer and later renege if a better opportunity emerges. Besides the moral obligation, offended employers have legal methods to address the ethics of an offender, usually through professional associations and personal friendships in the industry. There may be legal actions as well.

The offer process is highly unpredictable. Your best strategy is to pre-identify the "window of dates" during which time you desire all of your offers to converge. Stalling the date of your secondary interviews and requesting decision extensions are the most opportune techniques to assure a convergence of your opportunities.

Is your request for additional time legitimate?



Unethical Employment Practices

- Inaccurate resume
- Falsifying records
- Incomplete records
- Dishonest recommendations
- Lying in interviews
- Cheating on expenses
- Insincere job interest
- Abusing confidentiality
- Reneging on acceptance
- Leaving job prematurely

Figure 20.6

The most important reason for the secondary interview is to introduce you to several managers. Expect to be interviewed by four to eight individuals, most of whom work in your area of interest.

Each will evaluate your abilities, competence, and personality. These interviews are quite similar to the initial interview, but there are more of them. Each are part of the selection decision.

The employer wants to expose you to several staff who will evaluate you. It is important to not let down in any of them because even one “no interest” can often ruin your chances for employment. Give your planned presentation. Be consistent with answers.

Most interview visits begin at 9:00 A.M. and continue until 5:00 P.M. Little, if any, free time can be expected, as even lunch is reserved for interviews.

Many employers administer psychological tests during the day. Tests may last from one-half to three hours. There is a trend toward more employers using selection testing programs.

Tours of the employer’s facilities are common although it is not always a standard procedure. If it is not, and you have an interest, ask about it.

Near the end of the interviews, you will again usually meet the liaison person. You may be requested to express your impressions of the day and in return you can expect some feedback on your progress. Many of the interviewers will have returned their evaluation forms to HR by that time.

In many cases, you may get an intuitive idea of how the interviewing is progressing. However, do not plan on receiving an offer at this time. If an offer is extended or the employer implies that an offer is likely, you can usually expect to receive it in writing within two to three weeks. If you receive nothing within that three weeks, you need to follow-up.

If expenses have not been mentioned by the end of the day, ask what procedure should be followed for reimbursement. Many employers refund expenses at the end of the day, whereas others request an expense statement. Nearly all require receipts, so you should save all of them and give them to the employer at the appropriate time.

If you are visiting other employers on the same trip, plan on prorating your expenses. Besides the ethics involved, HR staff seem to have a close local fraternity, and knowledge of excellent candidates rapidly spreads. Do not jeopardize your employment chances by fudging on an expense statement. Use the “Expense Report” in Figure 20.5 if the employer does not give you a form.





Potential Sanctions for Unethical Conduct

- Prepare report of situation
- Note in placement file
- Notify current employer
- Advise potential employers
- Inform credit agencies
- Consult references
- Advise professional association leaders
- Inform employment agencies
- Contact personnel associations
- Consult legal counsel

Figure 20.7

If all went well in the secondary interview, you should soon receive a firm job offer in writing. You may have been told such a decision was already made but that it would later be formalized in a letter. These salary offer letters require your immediate acknowledgement response.

Consensus Hiring Influence

Rarely is an employment decision the domain of a single decision-maker. Several managers must be willing to say “yes” in today’s arena of consensus decision making. Few managers are willing to take the legal, political, and business risk and responsibility for a hire without the concurrence of other colleagues.

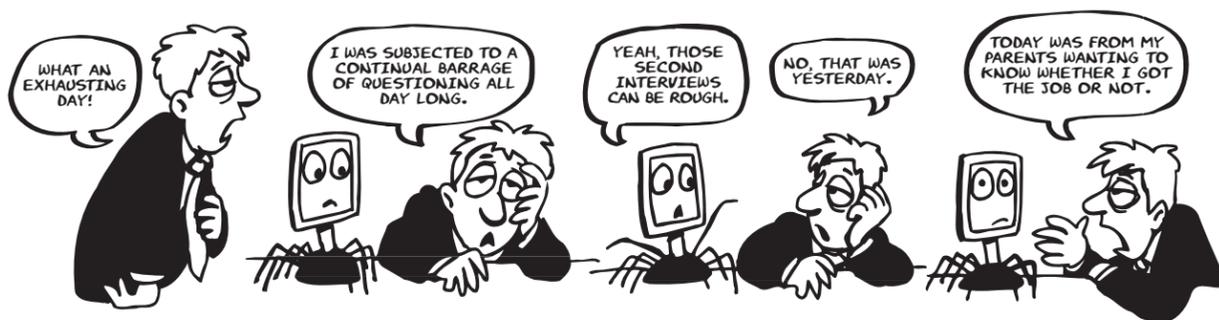
You must pass *several* interview hurdles, not just one. Employment is a “series” of selection interviews in the majority of cases. Most interviewers have the authority to “reject” you but not the authority to “hire” you without the concurrence of others.

The lesson is simple: You must impress *everyone* you meet. The decision latitude of the key interviewer is far greater than others, but as an outsider you must impress every person, trusting that each will influence other decision-makers.

Typically, there are four types of people who will interview you. As a skilled communicator, you must tailor your remarks to your audience. The four interviews are:

- The initial HR screen
- The peer interview
- The boss interview
- The boss’s boss interview

These may not be in this order. Each interviewer will grade you on different characteristics. By tailoring your responses to address their unique perspectives, you enhance your ability to navigate each hurdle in the employment process.





Cursory Evaluation

Human Resource Screen. The human resource interviewer is charged with ensuring a certain level of quality in all candidates. The referral or recommendation for the interview may come from outside the organization or even from the boss's boss. Assuming that the recruiter thoroughly knows the job and its qualifications well, this is a *cursory evaluation* to see if you match the stated job requirements. An assessment of your abilities will be left to the hiring organization to handle the actual position unless it is a training program.

Human Resources insures that fair hiring policies are addressed. You will be properly entered into the appropriate database, evaluated on standardized forms, appropriately screened for Affirmative Action requirements, medical concerns, legal considerations, etc. There is a cursory personality screen to ensure that you will be worthy of the line manager's time.

One role of the HR is to protect the manager's time. Applicants without the "can-do" qualifications never get to the hiring manager if HR is properly handling its role.

Technical Competence

Boss Interview. Upon hiring, you will be placed on someone's budget, and that person is likely to be your future supervisor for some period of time. Ultimate responsibility for the quality of the selection decision rests with this boss.

Bosses usually focus on three issues:

1. Will this person do the job?
2. Does this person have the potential to assume greater responsibility?
3. Will this person "fit" into the work group environment?

The "boss interview" can be more competency oriented than that of the human resource recruiter. Try to speak the unique language of the job. Use the language of the profession. Mention names of experts in the field. Reveal your technical abilities and your personal work attitudes, personality, and communication abilities. Satisfy the three issues above.

Your questions should focus on factors that will influence whether or not you will accept the forthcoming offer. Common areas of concern include performance evaluation criteria, past advancement, challenges, reporting relationships, work environment, personal career goals, etc. Come prepared for questions exactly like those presented in the "Twenty Questions" and "Stress Questions" from Chapter 17 on interviewing.

Work Group Fit

Peer Interviews. The employees with whom you will be directly working deserves some input on who is brought into the work group. Often very informal (such as at lunch and dinner), these interviews frequently seem





nonevaluating. They are very important! A weak evaluation can be an important signal of potential problems to the boss.

The peer-level interview can be a gold mine to you. Your potential work colleagues can offer you an exceptional insight into how life might be if you accept the offer. A great deal of sharing of mutual likes, dislikes, and work expectations occurs. Latch on to this opportunity and show *enthusiasm for joining* this group by asking many “presumptive” questions about your routine after you are hired.

Keep in mind that some of your potential peers may consider you as competition. Therefore, try to focus your interest on the most immediate assignments, daily routines, management styles, personal frustrations, current challenges, and (most importantly) on getting along with this group. Occasionally, you will deal with a recent alumnus from your school, so you may already have a number of things in common upon which to focus.

Future Potential

Boss’s Boss Interview. Assuming other interviews have gone well, you will meet the boss’s boss. This manager must give a stamp of approval or you are dead. The focus in this interview will not be so much on whether you can do the job but your *longer-term* potential at the firm. Regardless of the level of your responsibility, higher-level managers assume that your first 10 to 20 months on the job are largely learning experiences. The early months are “development oriented.”

This selection evaluation is on future capabilities. Your thrust should be on your long-term potential and how your personal qualities fit within the culture of the organization. Are your appearance, intellectual capacities, communication skills, and goals compatible with those expected of executives of this organization?





Play to Your Consensus Audience

Summary. No single strategy in the interview process can guarantee success. If you can identify the motivations of the different players in the hiring decision process, direct your communications to these concerns, and tailor your presentations accordingly, you stand to increase your odds of interview success. Using the STAR, ZAP, and other interview techniques will greatly aid in this final selection process. Each interviewer evaluation becomes an important link in the decision to make you a job offer.

The Employment Decision

Assuming your interviewing efforts have produced handsome dividends and several job offers, you are now faced with the task of deciding which offer to accept. How do you choose between offers that provide relatively equal salaries and advancement opportunities?

It is a delightful position, but the choice is not simple. Making the choice can change your lifestyle and move you into a career field that is likely to place an imprint on you for several years. The job decision can influence your career direction and shape your future success. The job choice challenge must be evaluated carefully.

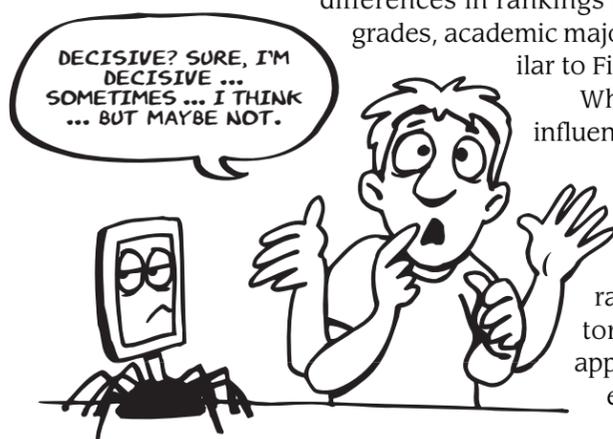
How do you make such a decision? Using the thirty-minute conversation, a one-day set of interviews, multiple website visits, etc., you must analyze this limited set of data to make this very important decision.

But with this limited information and other research data, hopefully, a sound decision can be made. Recommendations and ideas from faculty, career advisors, friends, parents, and so forth are additional aids. Collating even this limited information is a big project, especially when you consider the impact of the results on your future.

Factors to Consider

A number of studies have been conducted in which researchers quizzed people about why they accepted the positions they did. The rank order of factors in these studies varies depending on the population used. There are differences in rankings based on sex, race, prior work experience length, grades, academic major, etc. Consolidating these studies gives a table similar to Figure 20.8.

Whenever an individual is asked to rank the factors influencing his or her job choice, the ranking seldom coincides precisely with views of large surveys. Surprisingly, the top five factors tend to be the same, and the next five factors seldom deviate out of that group of five either. Salary consistently ranks between the sixth and tenth most important factors in most college-aged populations surveyed. For applicants with five to ten years of professional experience, salary often ranks in the top five.



Reasons Most Frequently Cited for Accepting a Job Offer

Rank order varies by candidates surveyed, but most surveys approximate this ranking.

How would you rank these?

- Opportunity for Advancement
- Challenge and Responsibility
- Opportunity for Self-Development
- Variety of Assignments
- Type of Work
- Freedom on the Job
- Salary
- Working with People
- Job Security
- Training Program
- Fringe Benefits
- Working Conditions
- Location of Work
- Job Title
- Reputation of Employer

Have you considered each factor in evaluating which job option is best suited for your long-term goals?

Figure 20.8

You should develop your own ranking scheme depending upon your personal value structure.

Job Comparisons

One purpose of ranking your values is to help you quantify the decision to accept one job over others. Few individuals select the first choice that comes along. An objective scheme to quantitatively rank various choices aids you in your final decision. One useful scheme is the "Job Comparison Form" shown in Figure 20.9.

The "Job Comparison Form" in no way dictates which employer to select. It is impossible to quantitatively rank all factors because one or two factors may be overriding. Some materialistically oriented people may place salary so high on their lists that other factors become inoperable.

The qualitative approach offers little help to the person who has offers in several different cities but who, for one reason or another, must locate in a given city. Subjective factors greatly influence job choice. Nonetheless, these are the factors used by most people.

Cost-of-Living Comparisons

Such factors as opportunity for advancement, type of position, work colleagues, type of training program, etc., must be given high priority in a job decision. You are also probably concerned about salaries and how they compare in different geographic locations.

At first glance, salaries seem much easier to compare than the subjective factors. A true comparison of starting salaries requires investigation of cost-of-living indexes, bonus or commission plans, and any special benefits (such as a car for personal use, purchase of products at discount, profit sharing, low home mortgage financing, etc.).

You should investigate the *Cost-of-Living Indexes* for the cities for which you have received job offers. There is a big difference between costs in Dallas and New York City, but how can you interpret this difference? Cost-of-living comparisons are available and helpful, but they can be misleading, so use them *with care*.

The family market basket used in calculating the index may be inappropriate for a recent college graduate who is single and has no dependents. Discrepancies result from the time at which the survey was made, type of survey, family status considered, and whether apartment renting or home ownership was assumed.

Job Comparison Form

Factor	Relative Importance to Me	Organizations Compared					
		Employer:		Employer:		Employer:	
		Value (0-5) = Product	Value (0-5) = Product	Value (0-5) = Product	Value (0-5) = Product	Value (0-5) = Product	Value (0-5) = Product
Prestige and reputation							
Size of organization							
Growth potential (sales)							
Product diversification							
Management caliber							
Industry choice							
Interesting assignments							
Early responsibility							
Location							
Job security							
Salary							
Training program							
Fringe benefits							
Travel responsibilities							
Immediate superior							
People work with							
Recommendations of friends							
Working conditions							
Interest level of firm							
Advancement opportunity							
Point Total							
Relative Ranking							

Rate each of the factors on a scale of 5 to 0 with 5 being most important and 0 indicating no value to you. Place your rating (5 to 0) in the "importance" column. As you gather information about a particular employer, review each factor in relation to the specific employer and assign a value of 5 to 0 to the employer for each factor beside the dotted line. Next, multiply "your importance" ratings and place the product in the column under the employer name. When complete for all factors of each employer, add the points and rank from high to low.

Figure 20.9



Probably the most thorough study available is that provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor in their monthly publication titled *Consumer Price Index*. Many libraries carry it.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics annually publishes a comparison of family budgets in urban areas. These budgets and accompanying indexes can be used to compare differences in price levels for regional variations. The indexes are classified for three different family income levels: lower, intermediate, and higher.

Another index is published by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce based upon the earnings of managerial and professional persons earning realistic salaries. Most Chamber offices have this survey available for viewing.

Figure 20.10 is a facsimile of a cost-of-living chart. Given wide monthly fluctuations, this chart is not purported to be current, but it is useful for illustrative purposes. The given index number is of no value except in relation to how it compares with other numbers.

Salary offers in different cities can be compared by dividing each salary by the respective city's cost-of-living index number. Caution should be used in interpreting the results because personal lifestyles vary greatly and most indexes are based on an "average" family.

Figure 20.11 gives some examples in comparing different salaries in different cities. After equivalent bases have been calculated, the difference in salaries between the high and low may be viewed as significant salary differentials.

Several websites like www.homefair, salary.com, and links from the large job boards do much of the number crunching for you. These websites give very objective comparisons based on salary averages and cost-of-living statistics.

Indexing Example (Hypothetical)

Chicago Equivalent of Boston

$$\frac{\text{Chicago index}}{\text{Boston index}} \times \text{Boston salary}$$

$$\frac{100}{119} \times \$50,000 = \$42,000$$

A Chicago salary of \$42,000 equals a Boston salary of \$50,000 in purchasing power.

Figure 20.10



Family Budget Indexes

Urban average	100
Metropolitan	102
Non-Metropolitan	91
<hr/>	
Atlanta	92
Baltimore	99
Boston	119
Chicago	100
Cincinnati	99
Cleveland	102
Dallas	89
Detroit	101
Honolulu	120
Houston	93
Kansas City	96
Los Angeles	97
Milwaukee	104
Minneapolis	104
New York	116
Philadelphia	104
Pittsburgh	97
St. Louis	97
San Francisco	105
Washington (DC)	108

SOURCE: *Monthly Labor Review*, "Intermediate Budget for a Family of Four."

Indexes are for illustration purposes only.
Consult latest publication.

Figure 20.11

Your Current Worth?

How much should your new job pay? Salary information can be found with the right resources but not without some significant digging to locate accurate figures. The Internet is full of data.

Compensation is no longer synonymous with salary. Many factors go into the compensation calculations. Most employers turn to compensation experts to help determine an appropriate salary compensation. The compensation analyst keeps track of salary norms within the industry and geographical area.

The experts regularly conduct salary surveys with their competitors in order to establish a fair salary structure within their own organization. These individuals also draw upon a variety of compensation materials published by professional associations such as the American Management Association's "Compensation Review" and "CompFlash."

Evaluating jobs is the first step in a salary structure. Compensation specialists use several methods to compare the value of the job to the organization. The Hay Point System, developed many years ago and regularly used, is the best known job evaluation system. It assigns "points" to various parts of a job, which are then summed. Points are assigned on the basis of responsibility, supervision, budget, complexity, training, and other aspects of each job.

Once points have been assigned, you have in effect ranked all jobs within the organization. A pay structure can then be presented that provides higher financial rewards to those with the highest point totals. A fair and consistent salary structure like this can help avoid the "pay compression" syndrome where supervisors earn only a minimal amount more than subordinates.

An organization can have a fair internal salary structure but not meet the demands of the external marketplace. Supply and demand also impacts upon compensation. Consequently, employers must also conduct competitive pay surveys and adjust internal schedules accordingly. They can also tap into giant computer data banks for comparative salary information based on regional factors, organizational size, industry, and other parameters.

In the poker game of salary negotiations, it may seem that employers have the greatest access to information, but you also can strengthen your hand. Knowing the appropriate salary information about your anticipated position is essential for career planning purposes even if you cannot influence the amount offered.



Business, employment, government, and private publications including association journals often release results of salary surveys. Start your research by looking under “Salaries” and “Earnings” in the internet search engines.

Various websites regularly provide articles regarding salary statistics that come from various trade organizations, compensation, consulting services, and employment agencies. This Wall Street Journal publication is available at most newsstands. The classified job ads also often give salary ranges for current openings which might also be useful.

For recent college graduates, the site www.jobweb.org publishes an excellent starting salary survey. It is also available from any college career office. It classifies starting salaries by major, degree level, industry, job function, and several other appropriate categories.

Many times, haggling over a salary offer is a nonnegotiable item. You tell the firm what you want and only if they can afford you will an offer be extended in your desired salary range. Even in these circumstances, you need to know some reasonable guidelines in order to avoid pricing yourself out of the market.

One of the worst sources of salary information is your friends. Most know even less than you if you have done your research, and nearly everyone tends to inflate the salaries they quote for personal ego satisfying reasons. Go to the professionals with access to large data bases, not amateurs with very small samples.

The most common negotiating ploy is to have an ace in the hole with a fixed salary. Even if it is not exactly what you want, you can “request” a higher amount from subsequent employers. Your chances of obtaining an offer decline substantially when you advise them that you need 20 percent more than the “ace in the hole” offer amount, but you may be just as happy with your ace if the other offer is not that much higher.

The wisest negotiating advice is to be reasonable if you wish your goals to be obtained. Remember that compensation is only one small part of the “offer” evaluation. Far more important is your personal happiness, and money often does not bring it. In most cases things like job title, location, development, and challenge far outweigh the salary issue. Negotiating pay is a private undertaking with long-term consequences, so a healthy respect for the total process is very important.

Don’t forget to factor into your decision items such as discounts (retail), commissions (sales), bonuses, incentive awards, expense accounts, and other perks.

Salary Information

Most people want some idea of what they can command now and where they may expect to be, salarywise, in a few years. Experienced people have a more





difficult time obtaining this data than recent college graduates. Internet surfing can provide an idea of your likely starting salary. Compensation studies are published regularly on the web.

Amounts can vary considerably by curriculum. The exact offer made will depend upon the candidate's prior professional experiences, major subject, degree level, grades, leadership activities, and, of course, the employer's internal salary schedule for the position for which the graduate is being considered.

Many career service offices cooperate with the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) and send weekly reports to them on offers. This enables a quarterly report to be prepared for all colleges to use based upon a national sample of job offers. Many colleges share this salary data with students and alumni. It is available on www.jobweb.org.

In addition to getting information from the graduates, several hundred employers keep career professionals informed of salary offers made to their students. The employers do this by sending a periodic report or sending copies of salary letters to the school from which the student graduates.

A check with your career counselor will produce an estimate of what salary might be expected after graduation. Given your background, a realistic estimate is fairly easy for an expert to predict. A range rather than an average will probably be given because the mean salary can be very misleading.

Assuming that the mean and the median are fairly close, it should be remembered that one-half of the graduates will be below the mean. Students who have grade point averages below "B," few campus leadership activities, and no related work experience generally fall below the mean and toward the lower end of the range.

You should not be misled by averages. This could result in your pricing yourself out of your job market value.

For experienced personnel, very few sources of salary information exist. The best sources are associations of similar career personnel, newspaper ads, and current magazine articles. Surf the web advertisements for comparisons.

Salary Resources

During your career exploration you reviewed several different career options before you decided to pursue those very special three or four best-suited options. One of the factors that you probably reviewed in each career option that you considered was salary data. You probably went to the websites below to review salary data in a general way.

What do you expect to earn? Most employers ask you about your desires. It may later be part of a negotiation position between you and your potential employer.

You want to be careful in getting into specifics too early. If you give a salary desired too early and too low, you risk getting an offer for a job that you really want at a salary that is low compared to other options that are almost as desirable to you. If you are too high, you risk the employer not even extending an offer based on your unrealistic desires.

Whenever pressed for a specific amount, you should provide a range. That range comes from a carefully researched review of what others are earning in similar jobs.





Where do you get salary information?

Perhaps the best source of salary information for recent college graduates who have less than two years of work experience is from The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Your career service office at your university regularly submits offers reported to it from recent graduate's acceptances and current job offers. Many students and on-campus recruiters submit these to your CSO who in turn shares these with NACE. NACE also has other sources of salary information.

NACE reports offers back to your CSO organized by major subject, type of industry, job function, geography, etc. Most are from recent graduates and interns. This range, mean, and median is one of the most accurate figures available. Your CSO usually reports this info on bulletin boards and password-protected parts of a website. NACE reports these on their student-oriented website called www.jobweb.org.

There are other websites, some of which are listed below, that conduct surveys and publish salary data. It is wise to investigate and review salary data from several sources before you start discussions in negotiations with an employer. This list is representative of what you will find on the web.

Most negotiation experts almost always suggest that you let a person name their salary first. Some employers will not negotiate. "Take it or leave it" is a common stance for recent college graduates because all students will be paid the same amount as they enter a management training program. All firms have limits for a given job.

You will find your job slotted into a salary classification scheme that has a range based upon prior work experience. Employers must control costs and keep all employees in a given salary classification reasonably happy. It is not common for employers to "red-line" you as an "exception" in a given classification group.

Because of salary information sharing, locally and nationally, the employer's range will be competitive. Most employers want to be competitive in their marketplace. Employers often visit the same web sites below to get the same data for specific jobs. You need to be in the ballpark or you will be viewed as salary unrealistic and thus not have an offer extended to you. Your negotiation range is rarely more than 10 percent higher (if any negotiation is permitted at all) above the initial offer.

Is it worth trying to negotiate? What counts? Your major subject, work experience, superior credentials, and location are some of the factors that employers use in setting salaries. You need to visit these websites and realistically estimate your potential worth. Your negotiation will start from the base that the employer sets.

Don't negotiate only on the basis of salary. Benefits, commissions, titles, locations, travel, expense accounts, stock options, bonuses, tuition reimbursements, product discounts, cost of living, and many other things may drastically influence your total compensation. Salary is the largest piece of your compensation but other things can change your take-home value by up to 50 percent.

Investigate your career options on the salary issue using these websites. Let an employer know of your expected salary range based upon your pleural research. Don't close yourself out of consideration based only on salary expectations. Keep your options open!



**NACE****www.jobweb.org/salary**

The National Association for Colleges and Employers works with its employer and college members in conducting a regular salary survey. The salary figures for recent college graduates by degree level, major, functional field, industry, and location. The detailed results of the very current survey is shared with its members, who share that with you. They also make summary results available on this student website.

Salary.com**www.salary.com**

The Salary.com website features My Salary.com, a custom environment for salary-conscious users; an enhanced Salary Wizard; a suite of interactive tools, the Salary Center, including the Cost-of-Living Wizard, Salary Timer, Millionaire Maker, College Tuition Calculator, and Job Assessor; and sponsorship opportunities.

SalaryExpert.com**www.salaryexpert.com**

A website providing salary, bonus, cost-of-living, and benefits data with information on over 31,000 jobs in over 45,000 U.S. and Canadian cities. Find the average salary by selecting a job title from a list of the 774 most common U.S. jobs (or download a free edition of SalaryExpert to expand the number of titles to over 30,000) and entering a zip or selecting a state/metro area.

Robert Half**www.roberthalf.com**

One of the largest search firms specializing in accounting, finance, treasury, and information systems. This site provides excellent career information and salary guidelines for the financial profession.

America's Career Infonet**www.acinet.org**

Search by industry to find out what occupations are included or search by occupations to find out what industries employ them. The resources library will connect you to more resources on-line if you need more information such as salary information. This link to America's Job Bank provides additional earnings estimates based on current job openings.

Abbott, Langer & Associates, Inc.**www.abbott-langer.com**

This site provides brief on-line reports and ordering information for more complete publications detailing current pay rates for various jobs and industries, including Accounting/Finance, Human Resources, Legal, Non-Profit, Manufacturing, Service, Marketing and Consulting. Additional resources include inter-city wage and salary differentials and an annotated bibliography of pay survey reports. This is an industry leading reporter of salary and benefits with limited access for brief summary reports by job title. Further specific categorizations are available for an additional cost.

WAGE Web**www.wageweb.com**

This site provides compensation information that helps employers attract and retain employees. Most of the data is available only for a fee but sample salary information is free. You can view salaries by finance, sales/marketing, HR, engineering, systems, health care, manufacturing, and administration. It provides job descriptions and links to other related websites.




Homefair.com www.homefair.com/homefair/cmr/salcalc.html

Homefair provides a “salary calculator” (both English and Spanish versions) to compare the cost of living in hundreds of U.S. and international cities. The “lifestyle optimizer” allows users to create a list of the 10 best cities for them to live in, based on user-specified ranking criteria (e.g., demographic, economic, or climate conditions). This site also provides crime indexes for over 500 U.S. cities and, through CityReports, a side-by-side comparison of two cities’ cost of living, climate, demographics and other information (first report is free). Related links include tools for analyzing relocation costs and organizing your relocation.

Benefits Link www.benefitslink.com

This site is for the Human Resource professional who specializes in managing benefit programs. Job seekers and explorers of the HR profession can gain insight into the profession. Good bulletin board for questions regarding benefit regulations and options. It contains both resume posting possibilities and job lead listings.

Life Advice www.lifeadvice.com

MetLife provides you with information on helping consider and make a job change. Practical advice about careers, job hunting, and obtaining health and pension benefits.

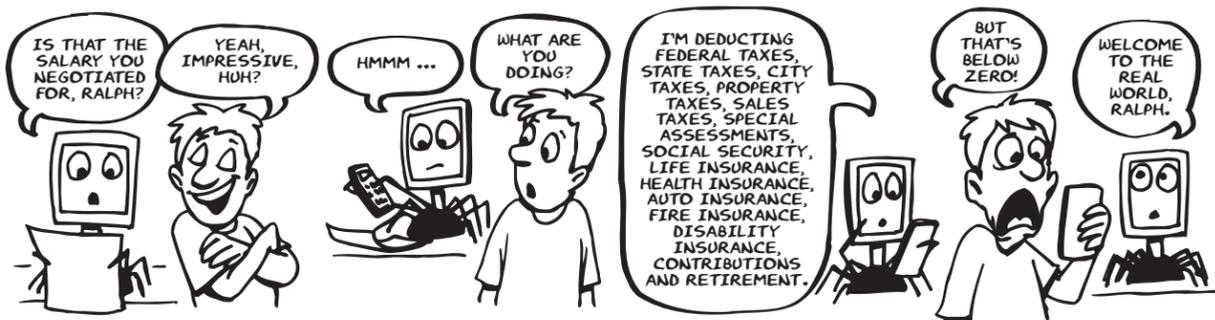
Inform Career Services

If you are a recent college graduate, always give the college career office information on both your offers and your placement. The Career Services office needs to know the employer, position title, location, and salary amount. This data is kept extremely confidential; most offices do not make it part of a student’s file.

The primary use of such data is to assist others in the career exploration part of career planning. The basic source of career information on salaries is past students.

Without complete cooperation from each graduating student, professionals would find it more difficult to help others in this very important aspect of career planning. Everyone wants to have salary information available to assist in career decision making.

Share your placement decisions with your college career service to help others in their career decisions.





Compensation Factors

- Base salary
- Commission
- Short-term bonus
- Incentive pay
- Signing bonus
- Stock options
- Cost of living
- Benefits
- Perks
- Overseas adjustments
- Work schedules
- Telecommuting

Figure 20.12

The sharing of this information with a source that can pass it along with a high level of objectivity and credibility provides an important service to others.

There are important secondary reasons for sharing offer and placement information as well. Colleges continually face financial problems, and the first items to go out of budgets seem to be student-related services. The simplest method for justification of the career function is to show its results. If an office can show a major contribution to a high percentage of graduates, it may survive the same cost reductions.

Aside from career planning, salary information aids everyone because honest and open salary information tends to raise the overall level of salaries. The average becomes the base that many employers use in determining an appropriate salary offer.

Open salary data tends to narrow the range of offers by eliminating the “lowball” offers; employers do not want to risk getting negative reputations. Employers are less likely to make noncompetitive offers if they know students have knowledge of their job worth.

Desired Salary

Most employers will ask on their job applications or their web applications what salary level that you expect. Employers have relatively narrow salary ranges for each type of job. An individual's niche in the range will depend on the current supply and demand for people in that field.

There are a number of ways to approach the problem of what salary to request. Asking for too much may eliminate the possibility of an offer.

If you ask for too little, that may be all the employer will offer. There is less danger with the latter because employers assume other employers might also be interested in you, and they do not want to risk losing a good candidate because of a low salary figure.

One idea is to suggest to the employer a salary *range*. This lets the employer know that you are not overly concerned about an exact amount.

Your perceived range and the employer's given range for the job will probably overlap. Of course, you should be prepared to verbally defend why your offer should be near the top of the range by documenting your above-average qualifications.

Another idea is to give the mean offer being extended to others with the same major, same degree level, and equivalent experience. This gives the employer an idea of your expectations and shows reasonable judgment. The figure can be verbally defended at the appropriate final interview, if you are asked, and additional support can be produced based upon your credentials.

It is not out of line to simply leave the salary line on the application. There is no stigma attached to this idea. Most employers have a firm notion of what they will offer regardless of what is written on that line.





Most application blanks request your desired salary.

One last suggestion is that if you have a minimum salary figure firmly in mind below which you will not accept the job, you should let the employer know this. If, because of certain reasons (such as having other job offers, being on a leave of absence from another position, possessing extensive related experience, etc.), offers below a certain amount are unacceptable, it is best to be honest with the employer and state this.

There is no advantage to wasting time if an agreement cannot be reached.

Salary is seldom the overriding reason for accepting or declining an offer. It is best to let the employer know that salary is an important variable, if it is, but also that it is only *one* of the criteria you will use in a final analysis of which position to accept. There are other variables that are more important than salary.

Negotiating Options

Salary is not a topic for negotiation with many employers. If it is discussed at all, it will be discussed at the time of the secondary interview. If you are asked, it is best to give an idea of your expectations.

The prospective employer needs a straight answer. Based upon this statement and your credentials, the employer will decide on a firm salary offer that is consistent with the organization's internal salary schedule. Once the figure is offered, it is not likely to change.

When attempts to renegotiate salary amounts are made by candidates, offers can be withdrawn. An offer can be withdrawn at any time prior to acceptance. If you are certain that an offer you hold is unacceptable, you risk nothing by asking the employer to reconsider. Although the offer may be withdrawn, there is the possibility that if the employer really needs your talents, it may be increased too. Why not try to negotiate in that situation?

Haggling is not always worth the risk. If money must be coaxed from the employer, a bad start is made. The employer may not be happy later because of the issue, or the employer may take the amount from the first raise anyway.

All good employers reward productivity. Showing what you can achieve by work will produce later rewards.

Negotiating Earnings

Given the preceding caveats, you may find that its valuable to negotiate in your unique situation. If you start the haggling process, you must do it with a very professional attitude. Negotiating requires a high degree of finesse that not everyone has.

You clearly need objective information before you start this process. Even if you are successful in raising the original offer, your new employer is in control of your future earning increases. Unless you gain a significant increase of 15 percent or more, often it will be taken from future increases unless you prove to be a superstar.

If you must constantly negotiate with your boss for increases, you may not be in the right organization. Most research also shows that if you use an external offer as leverage, and you get a counter offer from your current employer, which you accept, the odds are very high that you will leave within

Initial starting salary should be the least and last criterion used in evaluating which job opportunity to accept after college.





12 months anyway. Constantly haggling over salary is not conducive to a good career working relationship.

Salary is not the only item to use in your negotiation stance if you decide to negotiate. Some organizations have leeway on nonsalary items such as titles, office space, time off, telecommuting, flexible work schedules, bonuses, commissions, stock options, promotion time frames, review periods, expense accounts, training, continuing education expenses, starting dates, consulting options, independent earning latitudes, etc.

You need to carefully consider your needs and the employer's capabilities before you embark on negotiations. Your offer can be withdrawn. You have much at stake. Yet, you know that you are wanted or you would not have received an offer. But you do not know if you had a close job competitor who might still want this job. Both sides have options. You must judge your positioning strategies before you decide to negotiate.

What do you expect your posture to be? What are the employer's degrees of freedom? This is a guessing game that must be supported with the best facts that you can find. Bluffing about something this important to your life endeavor is much too risky. Ethical and honest dealing is your only legitimate position.

Given your situation and that of your new potential employer, some negotiation positioning recommendations are listed next.

Salary Negotiation Positioning

1. Wait for the employer to first raise the topic.
2. Have comparables based on sound research.
3. Know your honest realistic worth based on research.
4. Estimate how the employer will calculate your worth.
5. Don't volunteer a single figure first—give a range.
6. Don't bluff with your current employer.
7. Expect to leave your current employer before negotiating.
8. Counter offers from current employers are rarely long-term.
9. Negotiate only if you sense they really want only you.
10. Close negotiations after the second counter offer.
11. Get a percentage figure for benefits.
12. Factor in cost-of-living and relocation costs.
13. Plan on about a two-week negotiation process.
14. State your reasons to justify a higher salary.
15. Be realistic about your leverage.
16. Never lie about your salary history or other offers.
17. Avoid overreliance on salary.
18. Keep your offer amounts confidential.
19. Discuss offer options with your career coaches.
20. Accept the job you love.

Read these carefully. Identify your options. Estimate probabilities. Predict the employer's responses. Decide on your negotiation techniques. Make your offer amounts thoughtfully. Negotiate from strength but be prepared to accept an undesirable fallback position. You will not start your career on a good note if you lose in your negotiation attempt. This is a very delicate part of your career planning strategy.





Future Salary Potential

Very little information is available about what to expect after several years on a career path beyond the earlier mentioned resources. When questioned about future salary potentials, few employers can give an answer because very few are able or willing to predict the future.

Potential earnings depend upon the person's ability and motivation—also upon being at the right place at the right time. Rather than rely on blind luck, the “movers” in any organization tend to make their own “breaks” happen.

An excellent source of salary information is in the form of the U.S. Government Salary Schedule. The grades and various levels within the grades are closely attached to given job titles for government jobs. Exact salaries are given for each salary grade and years of experience at that level. Check out governments salary schedules on www.dol.gov website links.

These salaries are determined after extensive salary surveys of equivalent jobs in business and industry. There is a conscious effort by government representatives to keep the schedule competitive, yet not below comparable jobs in industry, so the government has a fair chance of attracting equally talented individuals.

Libraries, the Internet, career services, and government offices have the salary schedules available.

Another excellent source of salary information in selected career fields is classified advertisements. Many ads give salary ranges for a given number of years of experience for the positions advertised.

You must temper the ads, however, with judgment because many of these ads are “come-ons” designed to elicit a great number of resumes from potential candidates. Nonetheless, many of the jobs are filled at the salary ranges quoted, so they do offer clues about future earnings.

The most extensive listings of want-ads are in daily newspapers of the major metropolitan areas. Most are web enabled. Large libraries carry newspapers from many cities, so it is possible to review several papers and not have to rely on just a local paper. Sunday editions usually contain the most help-wanted positions. The large big job boards often have links to other websites that discuss salary comparisons.

Also, information can be obtained from want-ads placed by employers in their major trade publications. Most of the industries (automotive, chemical, petroleum, retailing, insurance, etc.) and selected career fields (data processing, accounting, sales, production, etc.) have monthly or quarterly periodicals that offer a classified ad service to members. Most are also on the web in the respective professional associations.

For example, *Automotive News* and the *Wall Street Journal* have sections where employers may place advertisements for talent. Most of the positions advertised require experience, so you can guess where you might be on the salary scale with a given level of years of experience. Most are now web based.

From time to time, surveys of executive compensation are made by management consultants, university professors, and business research institutes. Major libraries carry reports of these. Some of the major business periodicals (*Business Week*, *Commerce*, *Nation's Business*, etc.) summarize these studies in their regular issues. Excerpts can usually be located on the web. Unfortunately, some are password protected for members only.





An example of websites that offer salary information for experienced talent are listed below. There may be fees for detailed access.

www.abbott-langer.com
www.salary.com
www.salaryexpert.com
www.wmmercercor.com

The “compression effect” is a great problem for employers. Rapidly rising entry-level salaries push middle-range salary positions into an even slower rising upper salary range position. In other words, the spread between entry-level salaries and top compensation in the salary grades is narrowing.

This contributes to dissatisfaction and high turnover among bright young people. In selected companies and industries, this could be a serious problem in the next several years. In the United States, we see a narrowing in the spread from the entry-level salary grade of college graduates to the upper-middle-management ranks. Employers are putting more emphasis on “pay for performance.”

Sample Letters

One of the best ways to learn is to simply emulate. The following sample letters are designed to provide an illustration of typical correspondence required in a professional-level job search process.

The illustrations apply most directly to recent college graduates seeking an entry-level position upon graduation from college. These letters can easily be modified to fit most situations, including those for individuals with significant amounts of prior work experience.

You should not use any of these letters on a verbatim basis. You will want to observe the style and key points and then work your personal situation into the new revision.

The first letter gives you the standard business letter format. Subsequent samples do not show the return address, inside address, or close.

Many experts predict that the current mode of delivery by snail mail will eventually be replaced by e-mail and/or fax. The content and purposes are not likely to change. Use your best judgment in how best to deliver this information in your employment setting.

Do not handle this correspondence via voice mail or telephone alone. To avoid disasters, written correspondence is absolutely essential. Always confirm in writing!

E-mail may eventually replace all snail mail in employment communications with the mid-size to large organizations. If you use e-mail, make sure that you place your entire personal contact information at the close of your e-mail. This would include current employer, title, telephone numbers, zip code, etc., if you are employed. If you only want to use your home (or campus) information, make sure that your complete address includes street, city, state, zip, all telephone numbers, and possibly your personal website URL. For legal and medical firms, you will need to provide a fax or street address.





Most e-mails omit the recipients inside address. Even the opening salutation and greeting is omitted to get directly to the relevant content. Yet, clear writing and complete details can be used as screening variables. Attention to details and professionalism are important screening elements.

It would be wise to carefully review all of your relevant employment communication tools. The *"Communications' Appendix"* gives you a good base for design, review, and re-construction to help with your special needs. The shaded internal components indicate where you need to add your unique information.





Appointment Confirmation

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Day
- ▶ Date
- ▶ Time
- ▶ Purpose

Your Address
City, State, Zip
Telephone Number
name@e-mail.com
Date

Employer Name
Title
Department
Organization
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

Thank you for agreeing to a thirty-minute appointment with me in your office. I am confirming the following:

- Wednesday
- October xx
- 10:30 a.m.

I think that the meeting will be productive for both of us. The purpose of our meeting is to discuss my career interests. Your courtesy is very much appreciated.





Thank You for Initial Interview

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Last contact
- ▶ Still interested
- ▶ Support match
- ▶ Additional information
- ▶ Transcript
- ▶ Personal interest
- ▶ Follow-up

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Thank you for the interview on Monday, October xx, at *(location or university)*. I hope that you found several mutual interests as I did.

I am enthusiastic about the prospect of joining your organization. Your impressive growth and diversity sparked my interest in you. My familiarity in the field of *(your specialty)* and your client base would enable me to make the transition to your development program with relative ease.

- Enclosed is a more expanded resume which highlights my education and experiences in much greater depth.
- The unofficial transcript shows how my academic credentials appear to fit within your needed skill base.
- My personal endeavors are similar to others that you have hired in the past. I would really like to work with you.

Should you have any questions, please call me. I shall look forward to your call next week to set up the follow-up interviews that you indicated would be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

attachment: Portfolio Resume
Unofficial Transcript





**Keeping-in Touch Letter
(After 4 or more weeks)**

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Last contact
- ▶ Title/Profession
- ▶ Action Taken
- ▶ Interested
- ▶ Qualified

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

Thank you for taking time on Tuesday, November xx, to get better acquainted. Your description of the (title) position at (*organization name*) and the long-term opportunities in (*profession*) were very interesting to me.

Since we met, I have done the following:

- Managed a midterm grade of (*gpa*) in (*course*)
- Wrote a term paper on (*topic*)
- Interviewed (*number*) of others in the (*profession*)
- Prepared the enclosed unofficial transcript

I am very interested in the opportunities that you described. I hope that I am still a strong candidate. Please let me know if you need more information on my talents.

Sincerely,

attachment: Illustrations supporting the above points
Any new info since the last meeting





Prodding Letter

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Last contact
- ▶ Reinforce good vibes
- ▶ No pressure but . . .
- ▶ Interest
- ▶ Supporting data
- ▶ Excited
- ▶ Thank you

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

My initial interview at (*university location*) was very enlightening and encouraging. Although interviews rarely end with immediate firm decisions, I felt very good about the outcome of our discussions.

I respect your candid response that several items are pending before you can get back in touch with me. I certainly do not want to press for an answer when your response would have to be “no,” but I do want to keep you aware of my continuing interest.

Enclosed is some information that supports the ideas which we discussed in the interview. School is going very well and my grades this semester should be quite strong. My leadership activities in the (*organization*) are requiring more time than expected, but the results on the new (*project*) are really worth the extra effort.

I am excited about your job opportunity and really am anxious to hear from you about my employment prospects. I am confident that I can excel in the (*position*) assignment if given a chance. Please call me if you need more supporting evidence of my abilities to succeed in this assignment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

attachment: Any new or confirming materials.





Dear John Letter

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Build-up
- ▶ Careful review
- ▶ Interested but . . .
- ▶ Difficult decision
- ▶ Stay in field
- ▶ Best wishes
- ▶ Appreciation

Dear John:

From your conversations, it sounds as if another Dean's List is in the making. However, I imagine you are now becoming quite anxious for the satisfaction of completion.

During the past week, our management has carefully reviewed your credentials along with those of other candidates. While your educational background, interest in the banking business, and personal attributes were of real interest to us, it is our feeling that we cannot make best use of your strongest abilities.

This was indeed a difficult decision because of your attractive background and ambition. It can merely represent our best current thinking.

I hope this news does not seriously dissuade your interest in the banking business. There is a wealth of opportunity in this field. Unfortunately, we could not get together at this time, but I do want to wish you the best of success in your future endeavors.

Thank you for all your time and interest.

Sincerely,





The Ding Letter

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Appreciate interest
- ▶ Impressive background but . . .
- ▶ Keen competition
- ▶ Best wishes
- ▶ On file

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

Thank you for your interest in career opportunities with us.

Although your credentials are impressive, we unfortunately cannot offer you a position at this time. We are currently pursuing applicants whose backgrounds more closely fit our needs.

We enjoyed talking to you and wish you the best of success in your job search efforts. If the situation changes, we will keep your application on file and possibly contact you later.

Sincerely,

attachment: Portfolio Resume
Unofficial Transcript





Delayed Follow-up to Rejection Letter

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Last contact recall
- ▶ Lacked technical skills
- ▶ Initiatives to improve
- ▶ State changes
- ▶ Ask for reconsideration
- ▶ More information enclosed
- ▶ Telephone follow-up
- ▶ Appreciation

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

About four months ago, you were most gracious in meeting with me regarding the position of *(title)* in your *(department)*. At the time, you indicated that my personal skills were excellent, but I lacked some of the technicals needed to do a superior job so you could not pursue employment any further at that time.

I heard the advice you offered and took some initiatives to shore up some of my limitations:

- I took courses in *(subject, subject, and subject)* and am earning excellent grades of *(grades)* in them.
- I have an unpaid internship with a local organization where I really picked up some practical knowledge in *(technical areas)*.

I feel much better about my abilities to handle any assignment that your managers in *(department)* might throw at me. I would welcome a chance to prove myself, even if it was a temporary assignment. I would like to meet with you again to discuss my progress in the event that any related positions might open in the future.

Enclosed are my new resume and most recent transcript. I will call you on *(date)* to see if we might be able to get together in *(location)*. Your help has been most appreciated.

Sincerely,

attachment: Items supporting your data



**Invitation to Visit****KEY POINTS**

- ▶ Recall contact
- ▶ Further interest
- ▶ Invite
- ▶ Suggest dates
- ▶ Complete day
- ▶ Transportation/
hotel
- ▶ Expenses
- ▶ Transcripts
- ▶ Call us

Dear *Name*:

Thank you for completing and returning our "Application for Employment" form after our interview on October xx. We have now had an opportunity to review your application with several members of our staff. They have expressed interest in your background and would like to further our acquaintance by having you visit us at our general offices.

To insure that we handle your visit in the best manner, we would like you to indicate three dates on weekdays when a visit of this nature would be convenient for you. After we have received these dates, we will review them with our staff to see which is most satisfactory for their schedules.

The program for the day you are here will start at approximately 8:45 a.m. and will continue until 4:00 or 4:30 p.m. We will leave all transportation arrangements to your discretion. However, we would be more than happy to make hotel reservations for you. If you have any questions or problems concerning your transportation, feel free to advise us. You will be reimbursed for your trip expense.

We would appreciate transcripts of your college courses.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding plans for your visit. You can rest assured that we will do everything possible to make your interviewing visitation to our general offices interesting and informative.

Sincerely,

Note: *Some employers do not pay travel expenses. Do not assume that all invitations include the payment of expenses unless you have a statement, such as the one above, of the employer's intent to pay.*





Accepting Invitation

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Recall situation
- ▶ Decision date
- ▶ Suggest dates
- ▶ Or confirm date
- ▶ Travel plans
- ▶ Hotel
- ▶ Expense
- ▶ Thanks

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Thank you for your telephone call (*letter, verbal offer, etc.*) on March 1, inviting me to Anywhere, USA for further interviews. I was pleased to hear from you because after our initial conversation I was impressed with XYZ's training approach and wanted to be considered further.

I am eager to get together as soon as possible because I hope to make an employment decision around April 1. Since the campus spring break falls between March 11 and 15, would it be possible to get together then? Would March 15 be okay with you? (*Or if just confirming, indicate that you plan to arrive by 8:45 a.m. on March 15.*)

I prefer to make my own travel plans. Since I am unfamiliar with your location in Anywhere, would you please make a hotel reservation for two people for me. My spouse will be coming along to look around Anywhere. Of course, I will pay any additional costs incurred. Please advise me of the hotel accommodations.

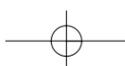
Your program appears to be exactly what I am seeking. I will arrive in your office by 8:45 a.m. unless advised otherwise. Thank you for your consideration.

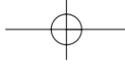
Very truly yours,

P.S. Enclosed is your completed application blank and the transcripts which you requested.

cc: Career Services Office, Indiana University

attachment: Application
Transcript





Thank You for Second Interview

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Situation
- ▶ Strong interest
- ▶ Great visit
- ▶ Information requested
- ▶ Confirmation of motivation
- ▶ Decision date
- ▶ Appreciation

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

I really enjoyed the day I spent on Wednesday, November xx, at your facilities talking to your managers. The reception I received was very welcomed. The interest shown in me heightened my excitement about the possibility of joining your management team.

Enclosed is some information which Ms. Jones requested that will give you some indication of my writing ability. A couple of reference letters show some of my commitment to excellence and hard work.

Thank you for your time and for an informative day exploring potential employment opportunities. I shall look forward to hearing positively from you soon. As you know, I would like to make a decision by *(date)*.

Sincerely,

attachment: Writing Sample
Reference Letters





Reaffirming Interest

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Situation
- ▶ Impressed
- ▶ Expenses
- ▶ Excited
- ▶ Supporting information
- ▶ Anxious to hear

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Thank you for arranging a most complete day of interviews for me last week. Because of the well-planned and organized day of interviews with so many people, the time seemed to fly by. I hope that your people were as impressed with me as I was with them. I can see why you are so profitable with your high caliber of management personnel.

Enclosed is the expense statement which you requested. The hotel apparently billed you directly because the desk clerk said there was no charge when I checked out.

The visit was truly enjoyable and productive for me. I am even more enthused about pursuing employment with you now. I have enclosed a copy of a recommendation letter from a former employer which you may include in my file.

In my interview with Mr. Smith, he expressed some reservation about my writing and research ability, so I am also enclosing a copy of a term paper which shows my capabilities. *(Any additional information you may wish to use to support your cause should be included, but don't overdo it.)*

I am anxiously awaiting your reply. Of the employers I have interviewed, your opportunity is one of the most exciting to me. If you require any additional information, please call me.

Very truly yours,

attachment: Writing Sample
Research Paper
Expense Report Form





Still Interested After Turned-Down

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Disappointed
- ▶ State job seeking
- ▶ Still interested
- ▶ Preferred employer
- ▶ Appreciation

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

I was indeed disappointed to receive your letter of March xx informing me that you had selected another candidate for the (*title*) position. However, I must say that it was a pleasure to meet with you and your colleagues who generously gave time to me.

The impression that you made on me was remarkable. Based upon our interviews I have decided to concentrate on exploring opportunities in your field. If there is any chance that you might later be interested in me, please give me a call. You would be my most preferred employer.

I would really be interested in hearing from you if any openings later materialize for which I might be qualified. Thank you for the consideration given me.

Sincerely,

attachment: Personal Portfolio
Updated Resume
Other Convincing Competency Documentation





Rejection Renewal Letter

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Situation
- ▶ Understand
- ▶ Still interested
- ▶ State why
- ▶ Request re-review
- ▶ Additional data
- ▶ Achievements
- ▶ Relocation
- ▶ Follow-up

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

I just received your disappointing letter of (*give date*). I can fully understand your difficulty in selecting the best applicant from among the hundreds that you interview.

(*Organization name*) was special to me because

I would like to request another review of my credentials in light of my strong interest in both your firm and the assignment. Enclosed is some additional information about my background that was not fully explained in the interview. These include an elaboration of my three significant achievements listed below that directly support my talents and qualifications for your opportunity.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

If the position is filled at this time, please keep my application on file. I would be happy to talk to any other managers at (*location or firm*) who may have similar openings even if it means relocation. I will call you next week to see if we might be able to renew our discussions.

Sincerely,

attachment: Updated Resume
Additional Information
Reference Letters





Persistence Letter

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Review situation
- ▶ Express disappointment
- ▶ State strong interest
- ▶ Request suggestions
- ▶ Request appointment
- ▶ Career adviser
- ▶ Follow-up call

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

You cannot imagine the difficulty that I am experiencing with your decision to accept another candidate for the position as a (*job title*) with (*organization*). My desire to work for you runs deep.

Perhaps you can offer suggestions on how I might better prepare myself for an assignment like this. Of course, I am exploring opportunities with other firms, but you clearly are the leader in the field. I have a strong ingrained commitment to be associated with the best which is why I continue to seek your guidance.

I would like to call you soon to see if we can get together again. I have a number of questions to which your answers would greatly assist in my future career planning. Your thoughts might be extremely helpful in assisting me in achieving my goals and eventually we may find ourselves working together. I hope that you can spare an extra 30 minutes to meet with me after I call.

Sincerely,

attachment: Reference Letter
Updated Targeted Resume
Recent Term Paper, Research, etc.
Other Supporting Documentation





Offer Letter from Employer

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Impressed
- ▶ Offer details
- ▶ Duties
- ▶ Training
- ▶ Assignment
- ▶ Salary amount
- ▶ Review
- ▶ Relocation
- ▶ Contingencies
- ▶ Details
- ▶ Offer closes
- ▶ Decision soon
- ▶ Follow-up call
- ▶ Positive close

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

We were very impressed with your credentials when you visited us on (*specific date*). As a result, we are pleased to offer you the position of (*job title*). This will start in our (*specific group*) division which is located in (*specific location*).

Your initial duties and responsibilities will be identical to those in the attached job description. Your (*specific time*) month-long training program begins here. Upon satisfactory completion of the rigorous development program, you will be assigned to one of our twenty locations based upon an evaluation of your interests and our needs at the time.

Your starting salary will be (\$*xx,xxx*) per year, payable monthly. Your first review will come after completion of the training program and annually thereafter. If you accept our offer, we will pay a relocation allowance of up to (\$*x,xxx*) which includes only physical transportation of you (and your family) and temporary housing for up to four weeks. Our benefit handbook is enclosed.

This offer is contingent upon your completion of your academic studies in (*specific area*), verification by transcripts and diploma, and passing a medical examination which includes a test for abnormal substances at our facilities on or before your reporting date of (*date*).

This offer is open for fourteen calendar days from the date of this letter, but we hope to receive your letter of acceptance much sooner than that given your expressed level of interest in this assignment.

I will call you in a few days to answer any questions you may have regarding the terms. Please feel free to call me collect if you have any questions. We are looking forward to your joining our management team.

Sincerely,

cc: State University Career Services Office





Acknowledging Offer

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Restate offer understanding
- ▶ Pleased and impressed
- ▶ Decision deadline
- ▶ Follow-up call/letter
- ▶ Appreciation

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

Thank you for your telephone call on March 1 offering me a position as a (*title*) in your (*name*) department at an annual salary of (\$*xx,xxx*). You cannot imagine the joy with which I received your call. After my visit, I said to myself that yours is the type of organization of which I would be proud to be a part. I was truly impressed with all of the people to whom I spoke.

I understand that you must have a decision within three weeks, and I will call and write you before then.

This is exactly the type of challenge and opportunity that I am seeking. I am pleased that you have such confidence in me. If you need additional information, please call me. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,





Stall Letter

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Situation
- ▶ Express delight
- ▶ Other commitment
- ▶ Request extension
- ▶ Ethics
- ▶ Firm decision date
- ▶ Strong interest
- ▶ Appreciation

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

Thank you very much for the offer letter that I received on March 15. The pleasure received from that letter was the highlight of my year.

I think you know how serious I am about this job and how much I would love to work for you. I do have some other personal commitments here that I am rapidly trying to bring to closure. These obligations will influence where I go to work, and so I must ask you for a two-week extension beyond March 30, before making a decision.

I realize that it is unethical for me to accept your offer now and later renege on my word. I would not do that. Your opportunity is outstanding, but I must be certain that it is the best decision for me at this time. May I have some extra time to avoid getting myself into a difficult personal situation?

I will give you a firm answer on April 15. Please call and leave a reply on my answering machine if I am not in. I am delighted at this offer and excited about the prospect of working with you. Your understanding is much appreciated.

Sincerely yours,





Accepting Offer

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Repeat situation
- ▶ Name influencers
- ▶ Tough decision
- ▶ Other alternatives
- ▶ Firm acceptance
- ▶ Repeat other details
- ▶ State contingencies
- ▶ Personalize
- ▶ Reporting date
- ▶ Eagerly preparing

Dear Mr./Ms. *Last Name*:

Thank you for all of the time that you have spent considering me for a position as a *(title)* in your *(function)* department. I am very appreciative of your efforts and those of Mr. *(last name)* and Mr. *(last name)* who have given so much of their time and effort in helping me with my decisions.

I have just made one of the most difficult decisions of my life. I have been fortunate in being able to select from several outstanding opportunities. Last week I narrowed my choice to two employers, of which you were one.

I wish to accept your offer as a *(title)* in your *(function)* department at the salary of *(\$xx,xxx)*. I recognize that this is contingent upon my passing a routine physical examination, and I anticipate no difficulty.

The influence of Ms. *(name)* triggered my decision; I think it will be a pleasure to work with her. I thrive under people who present challenges and have her knack for making one want to do the job.

I wish to report for work as soon after graduation, May 15, as possible. Please let me know an acceptable starting date. My spouse and I plan to take Ms. *(name)* up on her offer to help us search for an apartment. We hope to do that about two weeks before my starting date.

Please advise me if there is any other information you need or if any other details need to be worked out. You may call any day after 4:00 p.m. I am eagerly preparing for my new assignment and look forward to talking with you soon.

Very truly yours,

cc: State University, Career Services Office





Declining Offer

KEY POINTS

- ▶ Repeat situation
- ▶ Personalize
- ▶ Difficult decision
- ▶ Respectfully decline
- ▶ Better match elsewhere
- ▶ Leave door open
- ▶ Very impressed
- ▶ Ready to work
- ▶ Make referrals to others
- ▶ Appreciation

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Thank you for all of the time that you have spent considering me for a position as a *(title)* in your *(function)* department. I am very much appreciative of all of your efforts and those of Mr. *(last name)* and Mr. *(last name)* who have given so much of their time to me.

I have just made one of the most difficult decisions of my life. I have been quite fortunate in being able to select from several outstanding opportunities. I narrowed my decision to two employers last week, and you were one of them. I wish I could accept both.

After much deliberation with my wife, friends, faculty, and placement office personnel, I must respectfully decline your invitation to join your *(function)* department. I feel that another opportunity matches my qualifications and interests better at this stage in my career.

In the unlikely event that the other opportunity does not work out as planned, I hope your door might be open to me for possible discussions of something else in two or three years. I am very impressed with your operation and professional way of doing things.

After several years in college, I am ready to energetically meet the world of work. I have advised a number of my friends of your cordial and candid approach to hiring college graduates. A number of them have expressed interest in speaking with you when they graduate. I know that you have other offers extended to graduates of *(name)* University, and I wish you much success in your recruitment efforts. I sincerely appreciate all of your kindness and consideration toward me.

Very truly yours,

attachment: Updated Resume

