

How to Turn Down an Offer When You've Accepted Another

by Sarah Kuhn | August 13, 2018

Turning down a job offer is never easy. It's especially difficult to do while trying to maintain a professional relationship with your point of contact at the employer that extended you the offer. Of course, the reason you want to remain in good standing with your contact is you never know if you might need it in the future. For example, maybe down the line in your career you want to reapply at a company you previously turned down. So, in order to set yourself up for a graceful future reconnection, make sure to consider the following four things when turning down an offer.

1. Be prompt.

Make sure to let the other company know as soon as you can that you've accepted another position. This is polite and shows that you value the company's time. People involved with the hiring process could be working on things dependent on you behind the scenes. However, if you have an interview scheduled with the firm, consider still going. You never know what could come out of it. It's never a bad thing to be presented with multiple opportunities.

2. Be direct.

It's perfectly professional to concisely advise the other employer that you have accepted another opportunity elsewhere. Being a desired candidate is appealing to employers. Those who advise they are taking opportunities elsewhere rather than not responding at all leave a more mature impression. We live in the age of "[ghosting](#)," so set yourself apart from other professionals by letting the company know your intentions going forward, even if it's not proceeding forward with them.

3. Be appreciative.

Companies invest a lot of time and energy into candidates. From rearranging schedules to meet or preparing information and paperwork, a ton of effort is put into the hiring process. So make sure that if you turn a company down you thank them for the time that they've invested in you. A thank-you note is also a memorable touch that can leave a much longer lasting impression than an email message.

4. Maintain a connection.

You can tell your contact that if something changes or you reconsider you'll reach out to them, but that you've taken time to think it over and find it necessary to go with another opportunity. You could also ask if they'd like to connect on LinkedIn so you can stay up to date on the company. If you're working with a recruiter, let them know that if you think of someone who'd be a good fit for the position you can put the candidate in contact with them.

Final note

By taking these actions into consideration, you'll begin your new position guilt-free and with a great professional connection for the future. Remember, be considerate of the company's time and appreciative of their investments in you, but sincere and transparent about your actions moving forward. When handled maturely, turning down an opportunity to proceed further with a company can still leave a lasting good impression. Ending on a good note can make it much easier to start off on a good note again, if needed.

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