



HOW TO APPROPRIATELY CANCEL A JOB INTERVIEW

by Sarah Kuhn | [Vault Guide](#)

Unfortunate situations sometimes come up that we can't control. Life throws punches and we have to try to roll with them in the most professional way possible. You have a valid reason to cancel an interview, but don't want to lose the opportunity or make a bad first impression. What do you do?

We are all human, and life happens. In my interviewing experience, I will consider giving a candidate a second chance after cancelling an interview if they are professional when canceling, and proactively suggest another time to meet. If a candidate proactively suggests another time it displays a continued interest in the position. Acceptable reasons to miss an interview are commonly illness, a family emergency, or work conflicts.

Canceling an interview because of a family emergency

While most recruiters have no problem with someone canceling an interview for a genuine family emergency, I would be cautious about how you define this.. To be blunt, the idea of a "family emergency" is sometimes overused by candidates, which can lead recruiters to be skeptical. While recruiting, I had multiple people try to reuse the "family emergency" excuse more than once. The first time, I can give the benefit of the doubt, but repeat usage definitely starts to seem more like a "cry wolf" situation.

Canceling an interview because of work commitments

Work conflicts are also a valid reason—and one that can actually work in your favor. If I'm considering bringing you into our company, knowing that you show loyalty to your position at your current company even while looking at other options seems admirable.

Again, be wary if this is your excuse. If you schedule an appointment in advance, do try to do your best to stick to the appointment. If you know there may be a scheduling issue that could occur, let the interviewer know in advance. Sounding confident in your schedule and then needing to change last minute due to a work related conflict can make you sound disorganized.

Canceling an interview because you have another offer

If you have already accepted another position, the paper work is done, and you are certain you are staying with the company, it would make sense to politely cancel your interview elsewhere. Thank the interviewer for their time and inform them you have accepted another position. If you are still interviewing, nervous, or doubting your interest in the position and debating cancelling your interview, I would recommend following through with it, if only because you never know what's in store: your preferred choice might not come to fruition, or you might just meet someone who will change your career for the better.

How to cancel an interview professionally

If you have a valid reason and need to miss an interview, but still want to be considered for the position, the most professional approach is to email your contact, and then follow up with a call.

Include the following in your email:

- Your full name and time of scheduled interview.
- Concise, non-descript reason for cancelling. (e.g. No need to include medical details)
- An apology for the inconvenience.
- Express your interest.
- Be proactive and suggest a new time to meet.
- Provide your telephone number for contact. This is a benefit to you if you want to reschedule and a courtesy to the employer if they have questions.

Sometimes you have to make the best out of a bad situation. Employers recognize when candidate handles themselves well in unexpected and unpleasant situations. If a candidate can maintain professionalism, positivity, and be proactive in their interest it's hard not to give them a second opportunity.

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