



{ preview }

Unit 8: A Successful Transition

Succeeding in the new job

After completing this unit you will be able to:

- i) evaluate job offers and make an informed decision as to which would be better for your future
- ii) negotiate the right conditions
- iii) accept and decline job offers and write a letter of resignation
- iv) understand how to maximise the likelihood of succeeding in the new job

The Job Winners[®] Guide for Young Adults

© Rupert French 2011
www.jobwinners.com.au

It is illegal to reproduce any part of this document without an official licence issued by The Job Winners[®]

[®] The words Job Winners are registered as a trade mark

manual_unit8_pre01

Unit 8: Table of Contents

Part 1 - Evaluating job offers	3
Don't necessarily accept the first job offer	3
Asking for more time	3
Contacting other possible employers.....	4
Choosing between job offers	4
Choosing between job offers form	5
Part 2 - Negotiation	6
Introduction.....	6
Research.....	7
Your needs (<i>not</i> your wish-list).....	7
How the offered salary and conditions could impact on your work.....	8
Putting your requirements in terms of benefit to the organisation.....	8
Alternative solutions and fall-back position.....	9
Make your case	10
Confirm your agreement in writing.....	10
Part 3- Accepting and declining job offers.....	11
Resigning from your present job	12
Part 4 - Succeeding in the new job.....	13

Part 1 - Evaluating job offers

Don't necessarily accept the first job offer

So now you have received the offer of a job and only yesterday you attended the interview for another job and that interview went well. Do you immediately accept the position that has been offered or do you wait until you find out whether yesterday's interview could result in another offer? In times of uncertainty, when jobs are hard to come by, it is often tempting to accept the first job offer that comes along.

However, this isn't necessarily the wisest course of action. This is because you are more likely to be successful in the role that best matches your interests, personality, values and personal goals for the simple reason that you will be more motivated to achieve in that position. And, while no job is secure, you are more likely to survive any future restructuring or downsizing if you are successful and productive in the position and so one of the people the employer organisation can least afford to lose.

When you get two or more job offers, and using the job search strategies outlined in this program this should occur quite frequently, don't immediately accept the first job offer. Thank the person who is making the offer and ask for some time to carefully make your decision. If you believe that you may receive another offer in the near future, one that you would very much like to consider, you may need two weeks. However, employers may not be willing to give you that length of time so negotiate for as much time as possible.

Asking for more time

Whether or not the job offer is conveyed to you in writing, it could be a wise move to respond, by letter or by email, along these lines:

Thank you very much for the offer of (position). I feel privileged to be offered the position and I am very grateful for the time and effort you have spent assessing my application and for the interest you have shown in me.

You have asked me to give you my answer by (date). I appreciate that now you will want to get on with making an appointment and that you would prefer a quick response. However, just as it is important for you to select the right person for the job, you will appreciate the importance of my selecting the position in which I believe I can contribute the most to my employer. I do not think that I will be able to properly make such an important decision within the timeframe you have set. Therefore, may I request an extension of the time until (new date) by which time I will have made a firm decision?

I look forward to hearing from you. In the meantime, I do sincerely thank you for the offer of this position and I assure you that I am giving it serious consideration.

Yours sincerely

Part 2 - Negotiation

"Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate."

John F Kennedy, inaugural address, 20 Jan 1961

Introduction

It is very important to consider negotiation before accepting a job offer. Not only will negotiation help you gain the respect of your new employer organisation, it will also help you get the conditions that will allow you to focus on doing the job well. Furthermore, your starting salary will have long-term effects because each payrise you may get in the future will normally be a percentage increase. If your starting salary is comparatively small, so too will be your increased salary after a number of pay increases. A 3% increase on \$30K is just \$900, but on \$40K it would be \$1.2K, and in this way the salary difference continues to grow.

Therefore, negotiating the right salary before accepting the job offer is going to have ramifications to your wealth, to your performance and eventually to your superannuation.

Sometimes salary and conditions are not negotiable. This is normally the case for government positions and also for many positions in the private sector. However, it can be well worth while negotiating even if the position is covered by a fixed award: you may be able to obtain a level more appropriate to your skill or experience, one that will better motivate you to achieve.

If, however, it is very evident that the employer is not prepared to negotiate, trying to bargain may well be counter-productive. But if the salary and conditions are not acceptable, however non-negotiable they may seem, be prepared to negotiate and to decline the job offer if the employers are not prepared to budge.

It can be tempting to consider the person you are negotiating with as an enemy. Don't. Your aim throughout the job search has been to get them to like you. Now is no different. You want the person that you are negotiating with to like and respect you.

Don't go in with the aim of screwing every last cent out of them. Firstly they won't like or respect you if you come across as selfish or greedy. Secondly, if you do screw more out of them than the position really warrants, they will pile extra work onto you so as to get their money's worth.

Aim for a win-win outcome. You want the salary and conditions that will give you an appropriate lifestyle and one that will encourage you to put all your effort into doing the best possible job for the employer.

Attitude

The right attitude is essential if you are going to be successful in your negotiation. You must be certain and confident in the worth of your claims. If you show hesitancy or a lack of confidence, you will not only lose the negotiation, you will lose respect in the eyes of those you are negotiating with.

To ensure that you go in with this confidence, you need to prepare thoroughly. It's like every other aspect of the job search: go the extra mile and win the day; go in half-heartedly and you're lost.

Part 3- Accepting and declining job offers

When you accept the offer of a position, you are beginning to demonstrate how you will perform in the job. You are creating an early impression and, therefore, it is important to make it count in your favour.

Remember the three things that every employer is looking for in every applicant for every job - Skills, Motivation, and the ability to fit well into their Team - SMT. Let the letter clearly show your enthusiasm for the position and the organisation.

Thank you once again for offering me the position of [...] and I am pleased to accept.

I am looking forward to meeting the team again and to working with them to tackle the immediate challenges you have mentioned.

My current position requires me to give four weeks notice and I would like to start in the new role on [date]. Please let me know if this would be convenient to you.

Yours sincerely

This letter, as with all other letters relevant to this career transition, should be on your 'letterhead', that is to say, white bond A4 paper with the masthead of your résumé at the top.

Your principal objective throughout the job search process has been to get employers to like you. It is still your objective in this phase. While you may now be declining the offer of a job with Organisation X, in three years time you may want to apply for another position with them - so 'keep them sweet'.

Your letter declining the offer needs to thank them for the offer, to compliment the organisation in some way and to say that you have accepted a position where you believe you will be able to contribute even more than in the role they offered you. It could read something like this:

Thank you once again for offering me the position of [...]. After a lot of consideration, I have decided not to accept your offer but to accept another position which will, I believe, allow me to use my skills to even better effect than would the position you so kindly offered me.

I have been very impressed with the way your organisation is run and I would very much like the opportunity to work there in the future should a suitable opening arise.

Thanks again for the time and trouble you have taken with my application and I hope that our paths will cross in the future.

Yours sincerely

Part 4 - Succeeding in the new job

Your first and most important task on joining a new organisation is to become a valued member of the team. Without a good team around you to help and support your efforts, you will achieve little and your employment is likely to be short lived.

Three of Stephen Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* are all about teamwork and cooperation and they are well worthwhile reading and incorporating into your life as you start in your new career¹. Habit number 4 is to think win-win, to see cooperation as an essential ingredient for a successful life and to avoid competition. Habit 5 is 'Seek first to understand, then to be understood'. This habit is about consciously listening to what others are telling you and ensuring that you do fully understand their point of view before putting your own. You will find that this will not only win you firm friends in the organisation, it will also help prevent you from making bad decisions.

Listen actively and intently to other people at all levels of the organisation, your colleagues, your superiors and your subordinates. Ask intelligent questions and show an intelligent interest in what they say. Yes, take notes because in so doing you are showing that you are serious in your intention to be a productive member of the team.

The third habit in this group, number 6 in the book, is Synergise which embodies the notion that two heads are better than one. When you have a problem to solve, rather than work out a solution on your own, involve colleagues, get them actively participating in achieving the result - and make sure that they enjoy their share of the credit for the outcome.

Remember people's names; again, I suggest that you write them down along with some notes on things you should know about them, their roles and responsibilities. Also jot down salient personal details that could affect what you might say to them, if for instance, they have a seriously ill spouse or child.

Accept virtually all appropriate invitations to social occasions, formal or informal. It could be valuable to invite a colleague for a drink after work or to have lunch together.

There is little harm in listening to gossip as long as you don't put too much weight on it. However, spreading gossip, especially when you are new in the organisation, can be fatal. Never put anybody down or spread detrimental rumours about them, no matter how convinced you are of the truth behind the rumours.

Learn the established procedures and the unwritten codes of conduct. These are as integral to playing your role in the team as learning the rules of hockey, cricket or netball are to being a member of a sports team.

Embrace the corporate and team goals and collaborate to achieve them. A successful team shares the same goals and works together to meet them.

At the same time, take full responsibility for your performance (Stephen Covey's first habit). When things do go wrong - and they will from time to time - never be tempted to blame others, even if their actions were partly responsible. Always be prepared to

¹ This section draws on information on Stephen Covey's website www.stephencovey.com/7habits/7habits.php. However, the author, Rupert French, takes full responsibility for the way that this information is used and for other ideas and suggestions in this section.