

CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

YOUR OFFER: Saying Thank You, But No Thank You

Goal:

Learn how to tactfully and thoughtfully turn down an offer while leaving a good impression

How to:

Being tactical and mindful in this process will make all the difference. Take a minute to put yourself in the recruiter or hiring manager's shoes. Also, remember the world is small and people move between companies, so you may run into these contacts later in your career.

1. This all starts with reflection.

- a. Take the time to think through the offer. Reflect on accepting it and declining it. Be sure you want to turn down the offer before you move forward, as you cannot undo declining an offer. **Often, it's helpful to meet a coach to talk through your thoughts and reasoning.**

2. Think about the timing of giving your answer.

- a. There is a role to fill, so being courteous and sharing your decision as soon as you have made it is the best approach. If you can, let them know as soon as you've made your decision.

3. It's all in the delivery.

- a. Call: If you have a strong relationship with the person who is offering the role, schedule a call with them. Ahead of your call, write your notes on what you want to share during the conversation to keep you on track during the meeting. Note: if you are declining an offer to accept another, you do not have to share the details of the offer you will accept, although they may see the company name in LinkedIn. If you think the role you will accept will make you a stronger candidate for them in the future, think about the benefits of sharing such details. And let them know you'd like to stay in touch.
- b. Email: If you do not have a strong relationship with the company/contact, a thoughtful, well-written email will suffice. Keep your communication concise and to the point. Let them know you'd like to stay in touch.

4. Say thank you and suggest keeping in touch with those who you met along the way.

- a. After declining the offer to your contact, reach out to those who you met within the company throughout your process and reply to your last email to them. This will help them see the history of working with you. In this email, write a concise thank you note for their valuable time, insights and the offer. State simply how you've decided to take another role/pass on this one, then offer to keep in touch. Ensure each of your notes are unique and customized. This will ensure a more genuine email. Also, these notes often get shared internally and will leave a better impression if they are targeted.
- b. Then, LinkedIn with them if you haven't already. Do this on your laptop rather than your phone. The App doesn't allow you to write a note when connecting. You want to make sure you write a simple note with your invite.

5. Follow up and keep in touch as you suggested if you have a future interest in the firm.

- a. After a few months, as your internship comes to a close or as you start thinking about re-engaging for a fulltime role, reach out and share what you learned since you last connected. If relevant, you can also talk about the classes you are thinking of taking in future semesters and ask the hiring managers/alumni what classes they thought were helpful. You can also share a relevant article/news item to continue the conversation.