

Evaluating an Offer

You've got an offer! Now what? Before you make a decision on the offer, there are a number of steps you should take to ensure you are making the best decision for yourself.

Formalize the Offer

Always turn your verbal offer into a *formal* offer by asking for an offer letter. Offer letters provide tangible confirmation of the position. Your offer letter will provide details on:

- Position title
- Salary or hourly wage
- Start date
- Reporting supervisor
- Details of benefits package
- Deadline for response or acceptance

Accepting an offer on the spot is usually not recommended. Do not feel pressured to do so.

Some tips on asking for an offer letter:

- Ask for your letter politely and show your appreciation and interest in the position.
- If benefits are provided for your position, ask that the details are included in the offer letter.
- Don't reject another offer or give your two weeks notice at a current employer until you have received the offer letter!

Sample E-mail:

"Thank you for extending an offer! Before I consider accepting, I would appreciate receiving this offer in writing. Please include any benefits that I would receive in the offer letter."



Need Time to Decide?

Show your appreciation and strong interest in the position, and respectfully request time to consider the offer, taking into account the employer's timeframe. Ask about any details you need to have clarified. *There are instances when you can ask for more time to make a decision!* Here are some legitimate reasons for asking for more time:

- You would like to discuss the offer with an advisor, your family or another trusted source
- You already have an interview scheduled with another employer
- You have been offered another position already and need to decide which you would like to take

An example of an illegitimate reason for asking for more time: you are waiting for an offer from another employer but you have not already scheduled an interview. Employers want to know that you are fully committed to their company. Telling them that you're wanting more time in case another employer offers you an interview does not show commitment to their position.

Use this structure in order to avoid employer uncertainty:

"This is wonderful news, thank you very much!"

or *"Thank you for this opportunity, I am thrilled to be selected!"*

Then, asking for more time:

"I would like more time to discuss this written offer with my family/advisor/trusted source."

or *"I have further interview commitments already scheduled within the next week and I would like to complete them before accepting this offer."*

or *"I have received another offer and would like to evaluate both offers before accepting either one."*

Close by saying:

"I'm very excited to give you a formal response! I will be in touch as soon as possible before the end of the week. Please let me know if this accommodates your schedule or if you need an answer before then. Let me know if you have any questions or concerns."

Negotiation

Sometimes negotiation is needed before you can accept an offer. Times to negotiate are:

- The offered salary or benefits are lower than average or below your financial goals
- The position has negotiation in the job listing, making negotiation expected

Timing is important. Remember that the best time to negotiate is after a serious job offer has been made and before you have accepted it.

Plan

What do you want out of this negotiation? What could be improved about your offer?

Practice

Rehearse exactly what you're going to say with a career counselor or trusted source.

Compare your offer with typical pay, benefits and position statistics, and cost of living in particular areas. Take into consideration experience when reviewing the range.

Visit:

- [payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com)
- [glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com)
- [BLS.gov](https://www.bls.gov)
- [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)
- [salary.com](https://www.salary.com)
- [numbeo.com](https://www.numbeo.com)
- [coroflot.com](https://www.coroflot.com)

Negotiate

Expect the outcome to work in your favor. This will make you more confident!

Keep in mind that many employers have compensation structures and pay scales for every position. The starting salary, midpoint and maximum salary combined with other factors, such as your education and experience might determine the offer as well as how much the company is willing to negotiate. Be sure to look at the total compensation package.

Tip: Know the salary range you are seeking before negotiating. See the **Job Interview Guide** and visit the websites on the left for more information. Be sure to take into account personal cost of living. Add a cushion to your salary range to ensure that you are able to save each month, as well as accommodate unforeseen costs.

Come to a Settlement

Align what you want with what the employer is willing to compromise on, don't badger the employer!

Factors to Consider During Negotiation:

- Assess the job offer in terms of your needs, benefits and long-term career goals.
- Paid time off, vacation time, sick leave, flexibility in the workplace
- Commission
- Bonus: Signing or performance
- Health Plans: medical, dental, life, and vision insurance
- Retirement Contribution
- Tuition Assistance
- Relocation, commuting expenses
- Training and development
- Health and fitness programs

What if the offer is significantly less than expected? Sometimes the salary or details of the offer can be disappointing. This is not a time to be unprofessional and make rude comments! Instead, ask for 24 hours to consider the offer and speak with a career counselor or someone you trust to develop a counteroffer based on industry standards. Keep in mind that the employer may counter back and a middle ground amount may be reached in the end.

Making Your Decision

Accept or Decline the Offer

If the settlement can't be reached or the employer is not willing to compromise, it is okay to decline the offer and tell the employer that the offer does not align with your priorities. If you are happy with the settlement, ask for the new offer in writing.

Accepting an Offer

Accept the offer using the same method they offered it to you. If they called, call back. If they emailed, respond via email. It is best to also discuss the following when accepting:

- Identify the date, time, and location of your first day of work.
- Ask what documents you will need to bring with you when filling out hiring forms and when you can come to fill out those forms.
- Inquire what the dress code is at the company (business casual, formal or casual).

If accepting by phone, write and send a confirmation email to the hiring manager. This email should contain the job title, start date and pay that was discussed over the phone.

After accepting, there may be other loose ends to tie up:

- Contact other employers that you have interviewed with to let them know that you have accepted another offer.
- Send thank you notes to your references so they will be happy to refer you again in the future.

Congratulations on your new job!

Declining an Offer

If you find yourself declining the offer, do it with poise and professionalism. E-mail the hiring manager and thank them for the offer and their time throughout the interview process. Explain that after thinking through the offer or discussing it with a trusted source, you have decided to decline it. It is up to you if you want to disclose why you didn't choose their offer, just remember to remain discreet and humble.

Reneging

After accepting an offer, immediately **stop all interview activity**; you now have a professional commitment and obligation to that employer. **It is not acceptable to continue pursuing other positions at other companies after accepting an offer.** By continuing to interview or entertaining other offers, you are reneging. **Reneging is unethical and adversely affects your professional reputation with employers** and their interest in recruiting other students at ArtCenter. Reneging also shows lack of commitment to the employer you already accepted the offer from.

Response Templates

Do not copy these templates but rather use them as a guide.

Multiple Job Offers from Different Employers

Dear [Hiring Manager],

I am very pleased and excited to receive an offer. After meeting the team, I'm very interested in the prospect of joining your company.

Another great organization has provided a counteroffer, although [Company Name] is my preferred choice. Given my skills, experience and this counteroffer, I am wondering what can be done to move the initial salary offer closer to [\$].

I know I will make a strong impact in this role with [Company Name] and would like to make sure that I start off at the right level. I look forward to working out these details and accepting the job offer.

Sincerely,
[Name]

Declining the Offer

Dear [Hiring Manager],

Thank you very much for offering me the role of [insert name of position] with [insert company name]. Though it was a difficult decision, I have accepted a position with another company that is more in line with my future career goals.

I sincerely enjoyed our conversations and very much appreciate your taking time to interview me over the course of the past few weeks.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration; best wishes in your continued success, and I hope our paths cross again in the future.

Sincerely,
[Name]

Accept the Offer

Dear [Hiring Manager],

It is with great pleasure I accept your job offer for [Job Title] at [Company Name]. I look forward to working side by side with the rest of the team.

As you discussed, the monthly salary will be [\$] and that [Company Name] will provide [state benefits listed in the offer letter].

I will send (or bring) you the completed employment forms by [date].

Sincerely,
[Name]