



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Career Services

Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

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Rescinding a Job Offer

A student's job acceptance represents a commitment to the job and the company. Rescinding is unethical and unprofessional. When a student rescinds, the company loses time and money. Company recruiters must launch another job search - filling the position can take months. The reputation of the student's university, department, and/or career service may suffer as well. And the student's reputation in the industry may become tarnished. If the word gets out that a candidate reneged on a previous job offer, that student is less likely to be offered an interview or position in subsequent searches.

On rare occasions, circumstances may require that a student rescind on a job offer. Those circumstances might include an obligation at home, such as caring for ailing parents or remaining with a spouse who was transferred elsewhere or no longer can leave the area.

A student also could justifiably rescind and offer if an employer provided inaccurate information about the company or position. Students might consult with a Career Services career counselor on some ways to handle this situation. At times it could be appropriate to have a career services professional call the company official who extended the offer and find out more details. A student who must move elsewhere with a spouse or delay acceptance because of a family situation may discover that the company is willing to accommodate him or her.

No matter how tempting - a more attractive or lucrative job offer does not justify renegeing on an acceptance. For example, a student might accept an offer from Acme Widgets and turn down Amalgamated Widgets, where the student also interviewed. But what if Amalgamated Widgets then offers an additional \$5,000?

This situation can be avoided by resolving other job possibilities before accepting a position. So, for example, consider the student who interviewed with Acme and Amalgamated, and Acme makes an offer and gives the student two weeks to reach a decision. During that time, the student should contact Amalgamated and say, "I've got an offer. This is the deadline. Where am I with you?" The student can then make a decision within Acme's time frame.

And once a student accepts a position, s/he should cancel all scheduled interviews and discontinue the job search.

Ultimately, the issue of rescinding job offers is a **matter of principle**. It is not illegal to rescind a job offer - but is unethical and unprofessional. On those rare occasions when employers rescind offers - they are equally culpable. But the rare situation where a company rescinds an offer does not justify this practice on the part of you the candidate.