

## Ethical and Professional Conduct During the Job Search

As a job seeker you have the right to be treated equitably and ethically by your prospective employers. But did you know that you have responsibilities too?

When job seekers fail to act ethically, professionally, and in good faith, their actions have an affect not only on their own future career prospects, but also on those of their cohort and the University as a whole,

and can jeopardize the University's partnership with the employer.

How can you be sure you're demonstrating ethical and professional conduct during your job search? The following excerpt from the article "Playing Fair: Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Job Seeker," published by the NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) Principles for Professional Practice Committee, provides key tips regarding this issue.

### 1. PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ACADEMIC WORK AND RECORDS, INCLUDING COURSES TAKEN, GRADES, POSITIONS HELD, AND DUTIES PERFORMED.

You can, however, refuse to provide an employer with specific information about any job offers you may have received from other employers. You do not have to name the organizations that have made you offers, nor do you have to provide specific information about what salaries you've discussed with those organizations. Instead, you can give broad responses to such questions, naming types of employers—"I've interviewed with employers in the retail industry"—and offering salary ranges rather than specific dollar amounts—"The salary offers I've received have been in the \$25,000 to \$30,000 range." Incidentally, it's in your best interest to research salaries and to let employers know that you have done so.

### 2. BE HONEST.

Conduct your job search with honesty and integrity. Do not lie or stretch the truth on your resume, applications, or during any part of the interview process.

### 3. INTERVIEW GENUINELY.

Interview only with employers you're sincerely interested in working

for and whose eligibility requirements you meet. "Practice" interviewing is misleading to employers—wasting both their time and money—and prevents sincerely interested candidates from using those interview slots.

### 4. ADHERE TO SCHEDULES.

Appear for all interviews, on campus and elsewhere, unless unforeseeable events prevent you from doing so. And, if you can't make the interview because of an unforeseeable event, notify your career center or the employer at the earliest possible moment.

### 5. DON'T KEEP EMPLOYERS HANGING.

Communicate your acceptance or refusal of a job offer to employers as promptly as possible, so they can notify other candidates that they are still being considered or that the position is filled.

### 6. ACCEPT A JOB OFFER IN GOOD FAITH.

When you accept an offer, you should have every intention of honoring that commitment. Accepting an offer only as a precautionary measure is misleading to the employer and may restrict opportunities for others who are genuinely interested in that employer.

## **7. WITHDRAW FROM RECRUITING WHEN YOUR JOB SEARCH IS COMPLETED.**

If you accept an offer or decide that full-time graduate or professional studies are for you, notify your career center and withdraw from the on-campus recruiting process immediately. And, let employers that are actively considering you for a job know that you are now out of the running. By informing everyone that you've got a job or are headed to graduate school, you not only get the chance to brag but also to help your friends who are trying to get on interview schedules or who are being considered for positions.

## **8. CLAIM FAIR REIMBURSEMENT.**

If an employer has agreed to reimburse you for expenses you incur in its recruitment process, your request should be only for reasonable and legitimate expenses.

## **9. OBTAIN THE CAREER INFORMATION YOU NEED TO MAKE AN INFORMED CHOICE ABOUT YOUR FUTURE.**

It's up to you to acquire the information about career opportunities, organizations, and any other information that might influence your decisions about an employing organization.

## **Here's what you have the right to expect from employers...**

### **1. CONFIDENTIALITY.**

Employers are expected to maintain the confidentiality of student information, regardless of the source, including personal knowledge, written records/reports, and computer databases. An employer shouldn't disclose information about you to another organization without your prior written consent, unless necessitated by health and/or safety considerations.

### **2. ACCURATE INFORMATION.**

Employers are expected to provide accurate information about their organizations and employment opportunities. This includes,

but is not limited to, positions available, responsibilities, career advancement opportunities, and benefits.

### **3. FREEDOM FROM UNDUE PRESSURE.**

Employers are expected to provide you with a reasonable amount of time to make a decision about accepting an employment offer. They are also expected to provide you with a reasonable process for making your decision. An unreasonable process, for example, is one in which the student is told that the offer is good for a set amount of time; unbeknownst to the student, the same offer has been made to others and the student who accepts first gets the job. In addition, it is improper for employers to pressure you to revoke your acceptance of another job offer. Note: Cal Poly Career Services encourages employers to allow students to explore employment options fully as this will result in the strongest commitment from your new professionals.

### **4. TIMELY COMMUNICATION.**

Employers are expected to inform you of your status in the hiring process and communicate hiring decisions within the agreed-upon time frame.

### **5. FAIR TREATMENT.**

If an employer is required by changing conditions to revoke a job offer that you've accepted, you're entitled to a fair and equitable course of action. That can include, but is not limited to, financial assistance and outplacement service.

### **6. TESTING INFORMATION.**

Employers should inform you in advance of any testing, the purpose of the tests, and their policies regarding disclosure of test results.

### **7. NONDISCRIMINATION.**

Employers are expected to avoid discrimination in their recruitment activities and to follow equal employment opportunity and affirmative action principles.