



REPLYING TO UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

Once you have selected the successful candidate and they have signed back their offer of employment, you will need to follow up with the other candidates to let them know they were unsuccessful.

Make sure your successful candidate has accepted the job offer before you inform the other candidates; there is a possibility that your first candidate may not accept the offer, in which case you may want to consider one of the other candidates you interviewed.

All unsuccessful candidates are potential customers or referral sources for your business. Be respectful, honest, courteous and sincere. You want them to leave with a positive impression of your business because there is a good possibility they will tell other people about you.

If the unsuccessful candidate(s) are already employed with your company, you may want to have a separate discussion with them to discuss what they could do to acquire additional training or experience to prepare them for similar job opportunities better should they want to reapply in the future, and where appropriate involve their current manager to gain their support.

Always follow up with candidates you have interviewed, regardless of whether they were ultimately selected. This helps build a relationship with the candidate and a possible advocate (word of mouth) for your employer brand. They may not be suitable for the current position but could be a great candidate for other future positions. For those candidates who did not reach the interview process, ensure they receive a response on the status of their application.

How do you decline an unsuccessful candidate

You want to let the candidate know that all candidates and their qualifications were reviewed relative to the requirements of the available position. You have made your hiring decision and decided to go with another candidate. Thank them for their interest in the position and your organization, wish them luck on their job search.

Sample Script:

Thank you for taking the time to interview last week for the [job title] position. I enjoyed our conversation and hope we were able to provide more insight into the role and organization. We were fortunate to interview some very qualified candidates for this role. I wanted to let you know that, unfortunately, at this stage, we have decided to move forward with another candidate. Best of luck with your continued job search.

If appropriate, encourage candidates to keep in contact with you, and keep an eye on your company website so they can reapply should other employment opportunities arise in the future.

Top candidates not hired

For top candidates who you are not hiring after an in-depth interview, it may be difficult to follow a script. For these candidates, be prepared, as they may ask you why they did not get the job. Be sincere and honest. You do not want to discuss the other candidates but think about how you can provide constructive feedback on how the candidate could strengthen their application/performance. This conversation could be challenging, especially if the candidate was a great fit but lost out only to a marginally better fit. Be sure to stress that it was a difficult decision to make.