

5.6: The Job Offer

Learning Objective

- Describe how to complete a job offer.

Once the hiring manager decides who she'd like to hire, the HR department makes an offer. Typically, a job offer includes information about salary and benefits as well as details about the job requirements. If the candidate is interested, he will need to sign a contract or otherwise accept in writing before taking the job—usually a letter or email is acceptable until the employee's first day.

Making the Offer

If the recruitment and selection process has been conducted with integrity and transparency on both sides, the final step is almost a formality. That said, a job offer is a contractual document and it's important to cover the bases. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) provides the following checklist of details to include in an offer, with comments drawn from attorney Joshua Mates' "14 Things Your Job Offer Letter Must Have to Be Effective" article^[1] for SHRM:

- Job title
- Department, manager's name
- Start date
- Hours of work/schedule
 - Indicate whether the position is full- or part-time and specify the expected work schedule.
- Status (full time, part time, regular, temporary, specific duration)
- Exempt vs. nonexempt status
 - Employees need to be properly classified as either exempt or nonexempt from federal and state overtime requirements to avoid penalties or claims for unpaid wages.
- Rate of pay (hourly, weekly, or by pay period) and pay period frequency
- Offer contingencies
 - Identify any offer contingencies such as a background check, drug testing, reference check, and satisfactory proof of the employee's right to work in the U.S., as required by law.
- Paid leave benefits
- Eligibility for health/welfare benefits plans
- Work location
- If travel is involved, approximate percent of travel required
- At-will employment statement
 - State that either the employee or the company can terminate the relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. Avoid language that could be interpreted to form a long-term commitment, including "soft statements" such as "looking forward to a long relationship."

SHRM also proposes attaching the following if/as relevant:

- Benefits overview/summaries
- Job description
- Blank Form I-9 (bring on start date for completion) with supporting documents
- An employment agreement, non-compete or other restrictive covenants (bring on start date for completion)
- Self-identification form (bring on start date for completion)
- Emergency contact form (bring completed on start date)
- If travel is involved, summary of company's reimbursement processes

Learn More

To view sample offer letters (and access a range of Human Resource-related resources), visit the [SHRM website and click on the Resources & Tools tab](#).

The offer process itself is straightforward: either a Human Resource representative or the hiring manager will extend an offer of employment. If communicated verbally, this will be followed by a written offer of employment. The candidate will be given a set amount of time to respond—either to accept, reject, or negotiate—the offer. In practice, negotiations are often conducted prior to issuing a formal job offer.

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1. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/offer-letters-effective-employment-agreements.aspx>
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