



HOW TO HANDLE THE JOB OFFER

Handling a job offer should be a breeze for Legal Professionals.

After all, the offer of a job is a process of two parties reaching a mutually beneficial agreement, and Legal Professionals are involved with agreements every day of their working lives.

When it's your own career on the line, however, the calm, collected demeanor might well be shaken.

When considering a job offer you need to take into account the salary and if there is room for negotiation, financial benefits, whether the offer includes a bonus, what the pension contributions are, as well as other benefits that are important to you such as healthcare, for example.

There's a lot to think about and our guide helps you navigate the offers stage with ease.

The Negotiation

The build-up to a job offer is a little like a negotiation; each side makes a claim for what they would like before meeting in the middle. Legal Professionals can use the negotiation skills they've honed over years of practice to achieve the best offer for them. Whether it's a higher salary, flexible hours or home working make sure to support your request with evidence as to why you think it will be a positive thing.

Clayton Legals research found that the number of firms offering flexible working is on the increase, suggesting that firms are trying different ways to retain talent – it's up to you to demonstrate why what you're asking for is beneficial for them. Our salary survey also revealed that firms tend to value productivity and contribution to the firm. Asking for a bonus or incentive linked to performance shows that you're serious about making a positive impact. When assessing the salary, bear in mind your legal specialisation.

Not all firms reward different specialisms differently, however, our findings show that 41% of firms do, and market conditions play a big role in that. If a skill is in short supply the salary usually rises, so keep that in mind when negotiating.

Multiple Offers

Multiple offers on the table are ideal; it gives you the luxury of being able to choose a job instead of taking a job. Balancing the pros and cons of various options plays to the strengths of Legal Professionals and their measured response to decision making.

Legal Professionals are only human, however, and we are all subject to our emotional forces as much as our powers of logic – perhaps even more so when it comes to our career direction. Deciding which job to take can be emotionally driven, especially if there's a counter offer. Knowing that your current employer would offer you a higher salary or concessions to keep you can be very flattering.

Try to remain objective and weigh up all options before concluding what will be best for you in the long term.

The Do's and Dont's

Throughout the offers stage, it's crucial that you maintain a high level of professionalism, both with your prospective employer and your current employer. Bear these tips in mind and you won't go wrong:

- Don't hand in your notice until you've received a written offer, or you could find yourself in a sticky situation. Avoid mentioning anything to colleagues either – while chit chat with your teammates is not an official resignation, the news of your intention to leave reaching the partners' ears via the grapevine doesn't look good.
- Research into company cultures to see if you're the best fit for them and if they are for you. What does their employer branding portray? If you can see yourself fitting into the culture of the firm and getting on with colleagues, it's a good sign.
- Weigh up the benefits and look beyond the financial aspect too. Consider whether the move will support your professional aims and long-term goals. If you're looking to make a lifestyle change, keep in mind whether you'll be able to achieve it with the new job – maybe the office is closer to home, or the children's school for instance.
- Commuting is a big issue for many people and can significantly impact how you feel about the job. If a short commute is what you're looking for, think long and hard before accepting a job that involves a long commute.
- Communication and transparency with the employer and recruiter is vital. Be open about whether you have any other offers on the table. Be transparent with the recruiter, including if you have concerns or doubts.

They may be able to put you mind at rest with a quick conversation – but if you don't voice your concerns they won't be able to do anything about it. Clear communication is key.

- Speed of response. Take time to think about it, but don't leave it too long, as every offer only has a limited longevity! Weigh up the pros and cons of the offer and communicate your decision clearly with the employer and recruiter.
 - Keep in touch with your new employer. Don't fall off the grid, ensure you respond to emails, texts and phone calls - make yourself accessible by all means of contact. This is always important but especially if you're going through a negotiation, as clear channels of communication can make or break a deal.
 - Offers aren't always set in stone and there may be some flexibility over benefits, salary sacrifices, even the salary on offer. It's up to you to probe a little: if you can't get the salary you want, request regular salary reviews on an annual basis, or ask that salary be reviewed after the probation period. You can't have it all, so use the negotiation period to get as close to what you want as possible. If you're still not happy and want to decline, do so quickly.
 - Other offers are fine but be up front about it. If you have an offer on the table and still want to attend interviews that's fine, just make sure it's communicated with the recruiter.
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- Don't play dice with counter offers. If you're searching for a new position and your current employer makes a counter offer, think long and hard before accepting. It's only fair to them that you are sure you're staying for the right reasons and will continue to do your best work. One thing you should never do is secure a job offer with another firm, simply to leverage a better deal with your current employer. Underhand tactics will not be looked kindly upon and, moreover, make you look deceitful and could affect the work that is entrusted to you in future.
 - Treat your employer with respect. When you've accepted a new offer make sure you thank your current employer for their time and the opportunities that you've had while working with the firm. Even if the road has been rocky, don't dwell on the past. No employer likes to see a talented member of staff jump ship, so focus on the here and now and keep relations pleasant and respectful.
 - Celebrate! You've just landed your perfect job...now all you need to do is celebrate!
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CLAYTON LEGAL

We understand that while talent is your greatest asset - it can also be your scarcest resource - which is why you need a recruitment partner with the market expertise, insight and network to deliver the right people at the right time.

Clayton Legal has been partnering with law firms across the country since 1999 and during that time has built up an enviable reputation for trust and reliability. We provide an experienced and credible voice in the market by being able to demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the legal sector's talent agenda. Talent is all about people and just like you, our consultants are true experts in their field with a real drive for excellence that informs everything they do.

From Partners and Associates through to Solicitors, junior fee earning positions and support staff, Clayton Legal is the only name you'll ever need - and what's more - we are nice people to do business with!

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