**Dealing with Exploding Offers – Career Advice**

While most US employers will act in a trustworthy and honorable way, there are some US employers, recruiters, managers, and companies who do not treat people well. One example of poor treatment is receiving an exploding offer for an internship or for a full time job. This document is designed to help you understand: 1) what is an exploding offer, 2) how to best deal with this offer, and 3) next steps that you can take.

1. What Is an Exploding Offer

An exploding offer is defined as an offer from a company, such as for an internship or a full time job, that does not conform with the UCSD Student Employer Offer Guidelines for Employers (Link: <https://career.ucsd.edu/employers-recruiters/policies/>). The Guidelines state that for all offers made during the academic year or after October 18th, the employers should: “allow the student a minimum of two weeks to make a decision on an offer”.

Exception to this policy for return offers: If a student were to receive a return offer, this deadline is different. A return offer is defined as a summer internship conversion to a full time job offer to begin after the student’s graduation, and is offered between the start of Fall quarter to October 17th. In these cases, “employers should allow until November 1st or a minimum of two weeks from the date of the written offer (whichever is less) for students to accept or decline the offer”.

1. How to Best Deal with This Offer

If you have been given an exploding offer, here are some suggested steps that you can take. Please note that asking for extra time is considered to be a negotiation, so these suggested steps are common negotiation methods and tactics:

1. Please keep in mind that it is good to try to negotiate, but entering negotiation will not guarantee 100% success. You may need to compromise and be flexible in the middle of your negotiation. Negotiation is about persuading the other person or group into understanding what you’re asking for and why this request benefits both yourself and the company at the same time.
2. Determine how much time you need to consider this offer.
   1. Some people may like their offer so much that they do not need the suggested minimum of two weeks to consider an offer. That’s fine! You do not have to wait for two weeks to give your decision if you feel confident about your choice.
   2. However, if you need extra time, that’s common and professional to ask for this time. Please note that it is NOT automatic that you receive two weeks to consider this offer. You may need to decide for yourself how long you need, such as 5 days or 1 week, because you’re considering this decision.
3. Contact your company recruiter, or hiring manager, or company representative who made you this offer as soon as possible to start negotiating a new deadline.
   1. Try not to wait until the deadline is close, such as the day before or the day of the deadline, in order to start negotiating. A deadline extension is NOT guaranteed, so it’s important to convince this company representative that a deadline extension is within everybody’s best interest.
   2. Email vs. phone. There are many opinions on the best way to negotiate, and there is no one perfect way. The benefits of negotiating over the phone is that you get to hear the company representative’s response immediately, and can negotiate for flexibility. However, the downside of negotiating over the phone is that this can be stressful and people may struggle with knowing what to say next. On the other hand, the benefits of negotiating over email is that you get more time to consider your words. However, the downside of negotiating over email is that you may have to wait for a company representative’s response, and it is harder to be flexible to the company’s requests because of the time delay.
   3. Conversation tips. These tips can cover both written and spoken negotiation, but may be slightly more effective in spoken conversation.
      1. Try not to use language that sounds like a command, such as saying “I need you to give me a two week extension”. You are asking for a favor, and this imperative tone can come across as rude and pushy, because it is still up to the company whether or not to grant this extension.
      2. Instead, try to use inclusive language, such as by saying “we” or “our”, so that the company representative feels more like this is a mutually beneficial decision.
      3. Further, try to ask more questions, rather than make statements. Asking questions allows the company representative to express his/her concerns and needs so that you’re engaging them in conversation rather than fighting with them. However, please note that implied questions can confuse the listener, so it is suggested that you make it clear when you’re asking a question.
      4. Example: “I appreciate this offer, but I’m hesitating to accept because I’m not sure if I’ll be able to make an informed and intelligent decision. I know that you’ve got headcounts to fill, but one thing that can help is extra time to consider this offer. Could we talk more about a deadline extension of 1 week, such as until Friday, January 17th? Is this something we can work on together?”
4. Next Steps that You Can Take

If a company representative is still being stern about this exploding offer deadline, you can help yourself feel more in control of the situation.

1. You DO NOT have to accept this exploding offer. It is very much your choice whether or not to say “yes” or “no”, no matter how much pressure a company representative puts on you. This UC San Diego policy was written to show companies that behavior like exploding offers is not condoned by campus.
2. Report the exploding offer to your advisor and the Career Center. This report helps because the more that the Career Center and your department knows about this situation, the more that they can address it. Without this report, this company representative may decide to treat all UCSD students this way, which is not right.

Unfortunately, there are no 100% perfect ways to deal with exploding offers. However, please keep in mind that you do have the power to say “yes” or “no”, or choose to try to negotiate with the company for more time. The UC San Diego campus supports you!