



Offering a Dream Opportunity

Presenting the complete employment offer

Authored by Daniel C. Simmons, CPC



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A basic offer of employment has three components: start date, title and compensation. The easiest way to have your offer turned down is to provide only those three elements. The best way to get to “YES” is to provide a complete employment offer. When putting together an employment offer, you must recognize it will have at least 20 different elements to think about. If your candidate will be relocating or if this is an executive opportunity, that adds another 5-10 items to the list.

We are going to list and briefly describe these elements and discuss why presenting the entire opportunity is important in a competitive talent market. Most likely you will not have all these components for any offer. I’m not suggesting you change or upgrade any piece of your current program, simply provide your potential hire the most number of reasons to accept the opportunity that you are actually providing.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING YOUR COMPLETE OFFER

Ben Franklin, well-known for being an inventor, publisher and statesman, had a system for making decisions and many use it to this day. He would draw a line down the center of a page and list the pros in one column and the cons in the other. The column with the most became the choice. Two hundred and fifty years later many people still use this approach and your prospective hire is probably using this method to make his/her decision. If you want to recruit this person, he/she needs to know how to check each item on the list and if you have not provided them with this information, it is probable that their current employer or another company making an offer will successfully recruit this person. Be sure to provide information on all aspects of your opportunity. By taking the time to discuss every aspect of this career choice, you are showing the candidate that you actually care about them and respect the importance of the decision they are making.

THE LISTS

Because different things are important to people, this list is in alphabetical order in each section. The Basics is for a normal local hire. The Executive List provides for executive hires and The Relocation List provides for a hire that involves relocation, whether or not you are paying relocation expenses. There may be other items to add to your list, feel free to add them, but these items will get you off to a good start.

THE BASICS

Advancement/Personal Development Opportunities

Consider the prospective hire’s current situation. How is this a step up for them, what will they learn, and who can they become by taking these responsibilities? What is the career path from this role? The fact is, no one likes to take a new job; everyone wants to advance in their career. Make this offer all about them; talk about how their skill set or supervisory experience will be enhanced or how success in this role leads to a promotion. Remember, the offer is all about ‘what’s in it for them.’

Autonomy/Flexibility

Most people like to be the master of their own destiny. If there is more autonomy in this role than their current role or if the culture/supervisor is very open to new ideas, this is a benefit, discuss it. If there is flexibility in the work week or the opportunity to work from their home, mention this as well.

Challenging Work

If new technology is being used you are adding to the individual's skill set, this has a value and should be considered as part of the offer. If this is the first time the person will be leading a team, this is another perk. If there are exciting projects, then you should discuss this again at the time of the offer.

Commute

If the position is located closer to the person's home than their current job, this is a perk, mention it. If it isn't, then consider discussing flexible start times, work from home options or car pooling opportunities.

Compensation

Start at the beginning, the sign-on bonus, if there is one, then consider the base salary, the performance bonus or commissions/incentive, then move to a 401K/pension.

Corporate Culture

People work best when they are in an environment that suits their personality. Your corporate culture has a value, there are people who will leave their present environment to come to work at your company simply because your culture fits theirs and their current employer's does not. Take this opportunity to sell. Use words that describe your culture. Consider terms such as entrepreneurial, flexible, family-oriented, caring, fast-paced, casual, fun, professional, team-oriented, success driven, goal-oriented, etc.

Corporate Financial Stability

If your company has a great balance sheet or 100 years of profitable existence or 15 years of profit growth, you should discuss it. Everyone wants to work for a financially solid company. The candidate may suspect his current employer is headed toward tough financial times, knowing that he is going to a solid employer will be a big plus. Play up your company's success.

Direct Supervisor

If the supervisor is a mentor or a great leader, this job is a better opportunity. Working for someone who has a track record of promoting people out of their department is a distinct benefit. Make it very clear who this person will report to both directly and indirectly.

Health/Insurance Benefits

Discuss your benefits package and the related costs. Include health insurance, disability insurance and dental/optical packages.

Long-Term Earning Potential

Discuss bonus payouts, a pension plan or profit-sharing plan if you have it. If there are stock options or discounted stock purchase plans, discuss wealth building options. Additionally talk about the average raise/bonus paid out over the last few years. If there is a career path for this person discuss the path and the earnings potential of following this path.

Overnight Travel

It is possible that the travel with this job is less than their current situation; if so, sell the idea of more nights at home with family. If it is more, then discuss how well you treat your people when they are on the road, such as traveling business or first class and any flexibility you have

Physical Environment

If you have a beautiful campus setting, remind them of it. If their office comes with a view, or if they will have a private office, mention this. Consider the amenities at your facility that another might not have such as a cafeteria on-site, close to public transportation, etc. All of these things will be considered when the candidate is making a decision, remind him/her about the nice amenities your company provides.

Prestige

Most people don't leave Macy's to work at WalMart, even if it is for more money and a better job. Many people want to work at the most prestigious firm in their field or in the most prestigious sector of their industry. If your company is a leader in any way or if this job is more prestigious than their present employment, play this card.

Retirement Savings

The older sector of the workforce is thinking about retirement savings every day and the younger sector has learned from their parents that you need to plan for retirement early. Discuss the options that your company provides.

Team

Top performers want to work with other top performers. If you have a stand-out team or if you have a few key players, talk about how this recruit will interact with, learn from and contribute with these people. If you have a charismatic leader, bring them into the interview process and then remind the recruit that they will get to play on this leader's team. It worked for Lee Iacocca and Jack Welch and it still works for Donald Trump. It will work for you.

Title

This is like the prestige factor described above. Use an improved title as a bargaining chip. It works! If possible, create a new title, I know one company that changed the Director of Human Resources title to Chief People Officer. Wow! Sounds great doesn't it. Try this when you can.

Training

Discuss what they will learn. Include new technology or any formalized training programs in which they will participate, both internal and external. Today's worker wants a great skill set. If your opportunity will add a skill or improve one of their skills this makes them more valuable in the workplace and increases their ability to earn money.

Vacation/Personal Holidays/Paid Time Off

Some places give vacation time, some paid time off, which includes sick time and personal days. Also consider national holidays, dependent upon the industry you work in, this can amount to considerable time. Ask any banker, you'll quickly learn.

Work Week

Here is where you compare how many hours or possibly days the employee will be away from home with one job vs. the other. Additionally consider the length of the workday and the number of working days in a week or two week period. Remember to calculate traveling days if extensive overnight travel is involved.

THE EXECUTIVE LIST

Company Car

Not only is it that they are getting a vehicle, there is which vehicle. There is a great deal of difference between a Ford Taurus that the employee has to maintain and a fully expensed Lexus. Consider what they have and what you are offering.

EXECUTIVE BENEFITS

If there are separate insurance plans or other perks for your leadership, detail it here.

Executive Bonus

Performance based incentives for executives can make a huge difference in their income. Make certain that the potential is discussed as well as the recent pay-outs and the results required for the bonuses to be paid.

Contractual Agreements

If there are non-competitive and confidentiality agreements or intellectual property contracts to be considered or an agreement to reimburse moving expenses if the hire leaves before a certain period of time is up, bring it up during the offer. These items should not be left until the compensation has been agreed to, as it appears less than honorable. Discuss all restrictive covenants during the offer.

Stock Options

Vast wealth has been accumulated through stock options over the past few decades. Make certain that you have discussed how these work. A wise idea might be to have the CFO make a call to go over this detail.

THE RELOCATION LIST

House Hunting Trip

If during the time between offer acceptance and start date you would like for the new hire to visit the area (with spouse/family) with a realtor, preferably one who is a relocation specialist, you should offer to pay for this trip. Remember to consider travel, hotel and meal expenses.

Temporary Housing

It will take weeks to find a home and move goods. This could easily be months if real estate is involved. Short term temp housing can be done at a local hotel, this is normally for two weeks or less and you should provide a meal stipend. If you are providing more than month in temporary housing consider an executive apartment or simply providing a fixed allocation that will cover housing expenses for this period.

Moving Household Goods

Household goods moving plans range from reimbursement of a U-Haul van to the four plans that moving companies offer, (move, pack-move, pack-move-unpack, pack-move-store-unpack). Make certain your offer is understood and that you have made it as attractive as you can.

Draperies Allowance

It costs to move and often the trailing spouse is the one thinking about this, there are costs related to signing up with utility companies to food in the freezer to buying new curtains, (because the curtains never match up). A draperies allowance, a check to cover the incidentals can cover all of these issues.

Moving Unusual Items

Items range from horses and stock cars to boats and grand pianos. Remember to ask and make certain you are willing to make this investment. The best surprise is no surprise!

FINAL THOUGHTS

As comprehensive as I have tried to be in this piece, there may be things I missed. Look at what your company really has to offer its employees, maybe a sabbatical every 5 years or free on-site massage, whatever it is, it has a value. Discuss all of the value that your company provides with a potential hire, it will make your company and the offer of employment look as attractive as possible.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel C. Simmons, is a Certified Personnel Consultant and has been recruiting since 1991. He is the founder and owner of Continental Search & Outplacement, Inc., a recruiting firm specializing in animal agriculture and animal nutrition industries.

Dan has won over twenty awards in the last decade with the Top Echelon Network, America's leading placement network. In 2008, he celebrated his 500th career placement and has received Placer of the Year award for two consecutive years (2009, 2010). Named "Highest Producing Recruiter" of 2009, Dan is also a guest speaker for trade associations, universities and recruiter networks across the nation, providing career management advice and best practices for recruiting.

He hosts a blog for [employers](#) and [job seekers](#) giving valuable advice, answering everyday questions about the current job market.

If you need additional information on recruiting, send an email to dan@consearch.com and ask for a copy of *Hunting the Headhunter*, or visit www.consearch.com. Don't forget to follow Dan on Twitter @DanRecruiter. Good luck!

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