

SOME ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS TO GUIDE YOUR JOB SEARCH

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in ethics. Ethical considerations come into play in a variety of interpersonal and organizational relationships, and the job search is certainly no exception. From time to time during your job search, some questions might arise which have important ethical implications. For example . . .

Should I interview for positions simply to improve my interviewing skills? Can I continue to interview after I accept an offer if an attractive opportunity presents itself? Can I accept, and then later reject, a job offer? These and other questions can pose a variety of ethical dilemmas for students.

Despite some well-publicized exceptions, the great majority of employers operate ethically, and they seek prospective employees who share the same high standards of ethical conduct. Likewise, most students consider themselves to be ethical individuals. However, some erroneously believe that, in the competitive job market, “anything goes” if it results in a satisfying career opportunity.

As a member of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), Miami University expects students to observe the following principles during their job-search campaigns. In fact, you may be suspended from using our services for unethical behavior. These principles provide an ethical framework for conducting an effective job search and emphasize common professional practices you should recognize and follow.

- Interview only if you are sincerely interested in the position. Do not use interviews as “practice.” Instead, arrange for a digitally recorded mock interview at Career Services.
- Be certain to provide accurate information on your background, including work experience, GPA, major, etc. Falsification of such information is a serious breach of ethics and is grounds for termination of employment if discovered after you are hired.
- Respond promptly to invitations for on-site or second interviews. Accept them only if you are sincerely interested in the position. Never interview just to get a free trip to the job location.
- Follow established procedures if you must cancel an on-campus interview. Notify employers immediately if you must postpone or cancel on-site interviews.
- Exercise prudence in your on-site interview expenditures and be sure to keep receipts for travel and lodging expenses. Determine the appropriateness of unusual expenses in advance. You should never submit requests for reimbursement to cover personal expenses such as dry cleaning, phone calls, entertainment, etc. Prorate expenses if you visit more than one employer on a single trip.
- Carefully discuss offers with employers to verify terms and reach mutually acceptable response deadlines. Notification should be made in writing and in a timely manner.
- If you must request additional time to consider an employer’s offer, do so with as much advance notice as possible. Keep in mind that employers often face internal deadlines over which they may have little control. If an extension is granted, be certain to promptly confirm the arrangements in writing in order to avoid problems later.
- Your acceptance of an employment offer should be made in good faith and honored as a contractual agreement with the employer. **The single most serious ethical breach is renegeing on an employment acceptance.**
- Do not continue to interview after accepting an offer, and be certain to notify other employers with offers pending.
- Notify our office when you accept an offer so we may better assist students still seeking positions. This information will be kept in confidence.