

The Offer Acceptance Playbook

How Government Hiring Managers Can Dramatically Improve Job Offer Acceptance

Every declined job offer is more than a disappointment – it's a lost investment.

You've spent time, energy, and budget to attract great talent. When a candidate walks away, it sets your team back and can damage your employer brand.

At Kingston Human Capital, we've worked with thousands of public sector candidates and hiring managers. We know what makes a candidate say yes – and why they walk away.



THE PROBLEM:

Offers Are Falling Flat

Even strong candidates are turning down job offers. Here's what we see most often:



Disconnected Leadership

Candidates don't get a feel for the hiring manager's style, leaving uncertainty and doubt.



No Clear Path

When growth opportunities are unclear, candidates assume they don't exist.



Undefined Culture

If candidates can't picture themselves fitting in, they won't take the risk.

THE SOLUTION:

Build Trust, Progression & Fit

To boost your offer acceptance rate, focus on these three things:

- 1 **Connection with Leadership**
"What does great leadership look like to you?"

This opens a values-based conversation and lets you share your leadership style early.

- 2 **Clarity on Growth**
"What are your professional development goals over the next 1-2 years, and how can we support them?"

This signals your commitment to their career – not just filling a seat.

- 3 **A Sense of Belonging**
"Here's what our culture is really like..."

Share real, specific stories. Let them visualise being part of the team.

Your Offer Acceptance Checklist

Before you make an offer, ask yourself:

- Have I built rapport with the candidate – not just assessed them?
- Did I explain our team's leadership style in a way that builds trust?
- Have I painted a clear picture of how they can grow here?
- Did I share examples that showcase our team culture?
- Have I addressed their concerns, not just ours?

The best offers don't just include a salary. They include clarity, connection, and confidence.

"It mattered that they talked about development – I didn't just want another admin job."

“I turned down a role once because I didn’t get to meet the team. It felt like a red flag.”

PRO TIP:

Small Tweaks, Big Impact

- » Open with a strength-based question – e.g. “I noticed [achievement] on your resume – can you tell me more?” It builds trust and shows genuine interest.
- » Involve team members early – not just in interviews, but in casual conversations.
- » Send a follow-up email after the interview – it adds warmth and personalisation.
- » Offer a “Day One Experience” overview – to help them visualise the role.

The Offer Acceptance Toolkit

Need help putting it into practice? Use these:

Interview Questions: Access our companion paper *44 High Impact Questions to Identify Game-Changing Talent*

Day-in-the-Life Overview Template: Send this after the final interview to help candidates visualise the role...

New message

To [Candidate Name]

Subject A Glimpse into Your Potential Role with Us

Hi [Candidate Name],

Thank you again for your time throughout the process. We wanted to share a quick overview of what a typical day in this role might look like, to help you picture yourself on the team:

- 8:30 AM – Daily stand-up with the project team to align on tasks and blockers
- 10:00 AM – Deep-dive session with your manager to discuss your ideas on the policy framework
- 12:00 PM – Lunch with your buddy or another team member (we encourage social connection)
- 1:30 PM – Collaborating with external stakeholders to gather feedback
- 3:30 PM – Wrapping up, sharing wins and learnings on Teams

Let us know if you’d like to speak to a future teammate to hear more. We’re here to support your decision.

Warm regards,
[Hiring Manager Name]

Send

Candidate Follow-Up Email Template: Use after the final interview to build rapport and show investment...

New message

To [Candidate Name]

Subject Thanks for Meeting with Us!

Hi [Candidate Name],

It was great to meet you and learn more about your experience. We really appreciated your insights into [insert personalised detail], and we hope the conversation gave you a strong sense of who we are as a team.

If you have any questions or would like to clarify anything, we’re just an email or phone call away. We’ll be back in touch by [insert timeframe] with next steps.

Thank you again for your time and energy.

Warmly,
[Hiring Manager Name]

Send



Decision-Maker's Guide: Support Your Managers

For Executives & HR Leaders:

- » Coach managers to confidently share leadership style and team dynamics
- » Equip them with tools – success stories, culture decks, career paths
- » Attend interviews where possible – it shows candidates they matter
- » Debrief post-interview to share insights and reinforce consistency
- » Review rejected offers quarterly – find and fix the trends

If You Do Just 5 Things...

- 1 Build rapport with a strength-based question
- 2 Talk openly about leadership style and expectations
- 3 Provide a clear picture of professional growth
- 4 Bring your culture to life with real stories
- 5 Follow up quickly – with warmth and clarity



You Don't Have to Do It Alone

At Kingston Human Capital, we're here to help you secure not just the right candidate — but the right *yes*. We offer coaching for hiring managers, role scoping support, and candidate engagement strategies that boost outcomes.

Let's take the hassle out of hiring, together.

Ready to Win More 'Yes' Decisions?

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