

Ask the Career Coach: Let's Be Friends

Just because you think the job isn't right for you doesn't mean you shouldn't retain a connection with your interviewer.

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

As appeared in MillburnPatch.com on September 29, 2010 (www.MillburnPatch.com)

Dear Career Coach Lisa,

How do you take yourself out of the interview process for a job that doesn't fit your needs but still keep the company interested in you for future positions?

MB
Short Hills

The interview process is really a chemistry test. Even if the job is not the right match for you, you can make a new connection for the future. In addition, this person will know what you are about and gauge your fit within their company culture. The important thing is to leave the interviewer with a good feeling about you.

If you decide after the interview that the position is not right for you, you have a few options. The interviewer's impression is important as they will have the ability to recommend you for other opportunities. These opportunities can be within the company or refer you to colleagues at other companies. This is the power of building a network contact. People refer people they like and want to help.

You want to communicate your values, such as honesty and forthrightness. How you tell them that you are not interested in pursuing this position is important. Being honest and sharing why it does not fit your needs at the present time is critical in establishing the character trait of honesty. Communicating it shortly after you determine that this role is not a good fit tells the interviewer that you are straight forward and value their time. Proposing other qualified candidates enables you to become a resource and may help the recruiter fill the position in a timely manner. It also shows you care.

Staying in touch with the interviewer is critical. Connect with them on a social network site such as LinkedIn or Plaxo. Think about resources you come across that may relate to your conversations and send them links to articles with a note letting them know you are thinking about them. Doing this monthly or quarterly allows you to remain connected informally.

Over the course of my career, I have remained in touch with several interviewers that I have not landed the job or declined the job. These individuals are well connected and we help each other over the years and have built wonderful friendships.

About this column: "Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com. Lisa Chenofsky Singer is a Millburn-Short Hills resident and the founder of Chenofsky Singer & Associates LLC. She offers Executive and Career Management Coaching and Human Resources Consulting, writes and speaks on job search and career-related topics. Her web site is www.ChenofskySinger.com.