

How to recover from rejection

Rejection at work is most often experienced when we don't get a role we want or when our ideas or opinions are dismissed by other people.

Rejection can be discouraging, but we can develop a resilient response that can help us to learn and grow from these situations rather than feeling defeated by them.

Coach yourself questions

What is your default response to rejection?



How could you help a friend or colleague respond better to rejection?



Ideas for action



1. Get breathing space

Allow yourself time to process your emotions after experiencing rejection, but try not to dwell for too long.

Small setbacks might need 24 hours, while bigger challenges might need more time.

Name your emotions to tame them

- Be specific- write them down, say them aloud, or share them with someone supportive.

2. Get a new view

Break the 'me-centered' spiral. Rejection often feels personal, leading to overthinking. Avoid this by broadening your perspective.

- Seek feedback from someone different from you (e.g., a friend in another industry). Their fresh viewpoint can help you understand the situation from a new angle
- Put yourself in the other person's shoes and reflect on their potential reasons for saying no. Empathy can help to increase your objectivity.

3. Look for the learning

Whilst rejection can feel difficult, there is often a lot we can learn about ourselves and our situation.

Ask yourself:

- What's one thing I learned?
- What's one good thing about the experience?
- What's one action I'd take next time?

Keep your reflections brief and practical. Quick reflections prevent unnecessary rumination and allow you to learn and move forward.

4. Find the full stop

After rejection, take action to create closure:

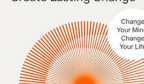
- Respond proactively and with a positive tone. This could sound like: *'Thank you for considering me for this opportunity. It's been a valuable experience for my development.'*
- Use the experience to build connections e.g. follow-up with a request to connect on LinkedIn.

Accepting rejection as a normal part of career growth can help you to move on.

Recommended resources

REWIRE

Break the Cycle, Alter Your Thoughts and Create Lasting Change



Rewire: Break the Cycle, Alter Your Thoughts and Create Lasting Change

by Nicole Vignola



What I learned from 100 days of rejection

A relatable Ted Talk with author Jia Jang



Helen and Sarah talk about working out how best to respond to failure depending on the situation on [#284](#) of Squiggly Careers.