

## Informing a Candidate They Weren't Selected

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When our clients choose a successful candidate, the next Sockwell Partners step is notifying the other finalists. We identified, evaluated, met, and presented them. They spent hours on the phone with us, took the time to travel to meet our clients, submitted to background checks, and gave us references. They were excited about the opportunity.

How to let them know they weren't selected???

A recent *Inc.* article asked if rejecting people by phone is more respectful than email (<https://www.inc.com/alison-green/is-rejecting-people-by-phone-more-respectful.html>) It appears that opinions are more nuanced than we would have thought – and are perhaps generational. The questions are many:

*Is it easier for the candidate to receive bad news by email with no need for an immediate response?*

*Is it easier for the search consultant to deliver bad news by email?*

*Are both spared from a tough conversation and given a bit more comfortable privacy?*

*Do candidates who grew up with digital communications prefer them to voice communications?*

*Isn't email faster, less emotional, and more business-like?*

At Sockwell Partners, we make the time to call. We are in the relationship business and our relationships are with executives. Despite the positive ways emails and texts have impacted us, a phone call is still our preference. We believe that "cut calls" should have the same communication level as our prior interactions – we didn't get to know our candidates without meaningful conversations.

We think that emails fall short in conveying both tone and empathy and can often be misconstrued. They don't answer questions or respond to emotions.

For those who prefer email cuts, we offer several suggestions.

*Don't use email as a crutch. If you struggle with the wording or procrastinate writing, consider picking up the phone instead.*

*Use first names. Be clear and direct. Show empathy. Refer to your meeting. Personalize - give a reason / reasons and explain. Thank the candidate for his/her time. Don't apologize. End positively.*

*Your paths may cross again, so consider using the cut email to build a continuing relationship and perhaps stay in touch. Keep in mind that "78% of candidates believe the way they are treated in the hiring process is how your company/organization treats employees." (<https://talentadore.com/blog/candidate-experience-statistics-know>) Your reputation in the marketplace matters.*

**We're interested in your opinion. Please let us know what you think – by phone OR email.**

