



Friend Asking You for a Recommendation

You have a summer internship with a very competitive firm. It's been a great summer and you have made a lot of good connections. You are telling your good friend about your experiences and s/he finds them really interesting. As your friend knows, you have built a good relationship with the recruiter, s/he asks if you would personally recommend him/her for an interview for a full time offer. Although you respect your friend, you know that s/he is not qualified for the position, nor would s/he be a good fit with the company. You believe that anyone you recommend is going to be a reflection upon you, and are not sure whether you should recommend this friend. What do you decide, and what do you tell your friend?

Take Away Lessons

Your recommendations will affect your reputation
Your decisions can affect your friendship

Issues

Loyalty to your friend
Your reputation with the recruiter
Balancing personal and professional relationships

Rules and Regulations

Does the company have any guidelines for personal recommendations?
Your own moral compass/list of rules
Never list

Questions

Will your friend get an interview on his/her own merit?
Does s/he have any other offers on the table?
How important is this opportunity to your friend?
How upset will your friend be?
Will this damage your friendship?
Can you explain the situation rationally to your friend?
How will this affect your relationship with the recruiter?
 With your friend?
What do you owe your friend?
What do you owe this company?
Will this really reflect upon you? How much?
How worried are you of not getting a full time offer from this company?
Are you just over-thinking it?
What are the risks of recommending your friend? Not recommending?
How much will this affect your friend's future?
Can you set guidelines to your friend about bringing you up or "name dropping"?
Can you recommend to the recruiter but "not really"?

Resources

Other interns
Your friend
HR department
Full time staff
Other friends

Options

Recommend your friend
Tell the recruiter about your friend
Establish guidelines with your friend
Tell your friend that you have no influence on the decision after your make a recommendation
Tell your friend you don't feel comfortable recommending him/her
Explain why you don't feel comfortable
Help your friend find other options
Tell your friend what the normal recruitment procedure is
Lie and say you did recommend him/her, but don't do it

Based on 2MC by Shaistah Bahrainwala, 2010 Section Leader