Position cancelled email

Send it within two business days of the requisition being closed or frozen, and before the candidate hears it from anyone else. Finalists and anyone with an interview booked should get a phone call first, with the email as the written follow-up.

ROLE CANCELLED

Subject: Update on the [Job Title] role

Hi [First Name],

I wanted to let you know directly that we've closed the [Job Title] position. The team has changed its plans for [quarter / this year], and the role won't be filled. This decision has nothing to do with your application.

That means we're stopping the process for everyone, including your [interview / assessment] scheduled for [Date], which I've cancelled.

I enjoyed learning about your experience with [specific detail]. If it's OK with you, I'd like to keep your details and reach out first when a similar role opens. Just reply if you'd rather I didn't.

Thanks for your time and interest.

[Your Name]
[Title], [Company]

ROLE ON HOLD

Subject: [Job Title] role: on hold for now

Hi [First Name],

Quick update: we've put the [Job Title] role on hold while [the team finalizes its budget / we complete a reorganization]. I don't have a firm date for when it will reopen. My best estimate is [timeframe], but I can't promise that.

Your application stays on file, and if the role reopens I'll contact you before we start interviewing anyone new. I'd understand completely if you keep looking in the meantime, and I'd encourage it.

I'll send another update by [Date] either way.

[Your Name]
[Title], [Company]

HIRING FREEZE, LATE-STAGE FINALIST

Subject: Following up on our call about [Job Title]

Hi [First Name],

Thank you for taking my call today. As I explained, [Company] has put a hiring freeze in place across [department / the company], and the [Job Title] role is one of the positions affected. We won't be making an offer.

I know you put real time into this process: [number] interviews and the [case study / presentation]. You were one of our final [two / three] candidates, and [Hiring Manager Name] asked me to pass on that the team was impressed with [specific strength].

When hiring resumes, I'd like to call you first. In the meantime, I'm glad to act as a reference or make an introduction if I hear of something that fits.

With thanks,

[Your Name]
[Title], [Company]

HIGH-VOLUME: EARLY-STAGE APPLICANTS

Subject: The [Job Title] opening in [Location] has closed

Hi [First Name],

Thanks for applying for [Job Title] at our [Location] site. We've closed this opening because [our staffing needs at this location changed], so we won't be moving forward with any applications for it.

We hire for similar roles often. You can see current openings at [Careers Page Link], and your profile stays saved so you can apply in a couple of clicks.

Thank you,
[Recruiting Team], [Company]

SUBJECT LINE IDEAS

- Update on the [Job Title] role
- [Job Title] role: on hold for now
- The [Job Title] position has been closed
- An update on your application with [Company]
- Following up on our call about [Job Title]
- Change of plans for the [Job Title] opening
- Your [Job Title] application: role no longer open

SMS / WHATSAPP VERSION

Hi [First Name], it's [Your Name] at [Company]. The [Job Title] role has been closed for budget reasons, so we've cancelled your interview on [Date]. This isn't about your application. I've emailed details and would like to keep in touch for future roles.

Placeholders to replace: [First Name], [Job Title], [Company], [Date], [Location], [Hiring Manager Name], [Careers Page Link], [Recruiting Team], [Your Name], [Title]