

Negotiating a Salary



The art of negotiating is the process of pursuing a goal in a dialogue with another person or persons. Its resolution is one in which all involved should feel satisfied. Negotiating should not be an adversarial process. Before beginning any negotiation, do your research, be organized, know what you want and be realistic. You should also be knowledgeable about non-salary forms of compensation consider them if offered as part of the total package.

Reflect/Research prior to interview

- Understand your strengths and why/how you are unique and how you compare to others
- Research and know the salary range of the position in the area you are interviewing in, Glassdoor.com is a great resource
- Practice the negotiation session

During the interview

- Do not initiate a conversation about salary or the compensation package
- If asked about salary in the interview, respond by saying that you are more interested in finding a position that is a good fit and that you are confident the employer is offering a competitive salary. If pushed for more information, respond with a salary range that is in line with what you researched beforehand
- Never accept a job offer on the spot, make sure you receive a formal offer with all of the information on the compensation package

When you receive the offer

- Start with thanking the employer and begin the negotiating process with positive comments regarding the company and the position
- Provide ample justification that what you are asking for is fair and reasonable, be sure to present this information in a professional manner
- Have clear evidence that your price is in line with the market or with that of other employees in similar jobs in the company/industry, not your lifestyle goals
- Avoid commitment words: always, must have, deal-breaker, never, won't consider. Successful negotiations require restraint and appearing impatient or greedy will work against you
- Don't run the risk of starting off on the wrong foot by making them reconsider you because you played hardball over salary
- Consider negotiating other aspects of your offer: benefits, vacation, bonuses, start date, and relocation costs
- During the process, hear what is being "communicated" not just what is being said. Listen for leading questions: "How does that sound to you?" or "Tell me how you feel about that!"
- Be aware of body language and other subtle signals
- Be sensitive to the employers' perspective while negotiating
- Keep in mind your industry; some industries, like public entities, may offer less flexibility of salary; whereas a private industry position may offer more negotiating room.
- Accept the offer once you receive a compensation package you feel is fair

Determine your compensation requirements

Based on your research, what is your ideal salary range? _____

What certifications/trainings/special experience do you have to justify this range? _____

What Non-Salary items are feasible with the company you are negotiating with? _____

Non-salary compensation package examples:

Flex time

Signing bonus

Yearly/quarterly bonus

Moving/relocation costs

Profit sharing

Retirement/401K

Stock options/equity

Incentive savings

Paid vacation time

Laptop/personal computer

Educational reimbursement

Commuting expenses/parking

Maternity/paternity leave

Child care expenses

Life insurance

Health/dental/optical insurance

Company car

Cell phone

Club/association membership

Corporate recreation facilities

Start date

Early reviews with option for salary increase