

Negotiations

The culmination of years in graduate school and weeks of job searching is the job offer! Receiving a job offer is exciting, but refrain from accepting a job on the spot. Approach the negotiation phase of the job search process as thoughtfully and professionally as you approached earlier phases.

ALWAYS NEGOTIATE

- Employers are almost always willing to negotiate because they want top candidates to accept their offers.
- If an employer extends an offer, you have leverage. The time between receiving and accepting an offer is your best chance to get what you want.
- Always ask for a higher salary because your future raises and bonuses will be based on salary.
- Prioritize what's important to you and negotiate a few other things such as:
 - Signing bonus
 - Stocks
 - Start date, flexible scheduling, or telecommuting
 - Vacation time
 - Relocation costs
 - Professional development money (dues, subscriptions, conferences)
 - Projects, job responsibilities, job title
 - Office size, location, and privacy
 - Furniture and computer equipment

MAINTAIN A PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE

- You should approach negotiations as mutual problem-solving tasks.
- The way you negotiate sets the stage for future interactions with your colleagues – you do not want them to think you are a pushover or a bully.
- Negotiating in a professional manner indicates that you know what you want and can stand up for yourself but also can compromise and work collaboratively.
- Be aware of monetary and cultural cues in the organization.

TALK IN RANGES

- If a hiring manager wants you to state your expected salary before he/she has talked numbers, state an acceptable salary range, rather than an exact figure.
- Generally, whoever mentions a specific number first loses the battle.

ASK QUESTIONS

- Ask questions about the position so you can make an informed decision about the job offer.
- Requesting information indicates confidence, professionalism, and thoroughness.
- Do not assume anything.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

- If you are interested in a company but are offered a salary below your standards, keep talking.
- Employers want to reach a fair deal because they want you to accept the job, be happy, and stay at the job. Starting the hiring process again is time-consuming and expensive.
- Ask questions like “How can we make this work?”
- Frame your requests in terms of what you need to be maximally successful at the company.
- Focus on the value you will bring to the organization (special skills and knowledge, training from esteemed universities, related experience, etc).
- Don't be afraid to use silence.

ASSESS THE OFFER

- Do you really want that particular job or are you just excited to have a job offer?
- How does the offer compare to other offers you've received? In addition to the negotiable items discussed on the previous page, compare your offers in terms of these benefits:
 - Gym memberships
 - Day care availability
 - Concierge service
 - Medical, dental, orthodontic, optometric, and mental health coverage
 - Retirement, life insurance, and long-term disability coverage
 - Overtime pay
 - Number of paid holidays
 - Company laptop, cell phone, PDA, and car
 - Parking or commuting reimbursement
 - Tuition reimbursement for future degrees
- How does the offer compare to industry standards?

CHECK IN

- If the first offer you receive is not your top choice, you have two primary options:
 - Call your first choice and inquire about the status of the hiring process. Feel free to mention that you have another offer but really prefer to work for their company. Don't play the employers against one another.
 - Ask the company that offered you the position if they can give you a few days or weeks to consider their offer.

GET IT IN WRITING

- When an employer offers you a position, get the offer in writing while you consider your options.
- Upon completion of the negotiation process, get the revised offer in writing.
- After you verbally accept an offer, write an acceptance letter.

DON'T TURN BACK

- Once you accept a job offer, celebrate your success!
- Do not back out. Stop looking for jobs. Have no regrets.
- Inform other companies that they should no longer be considering your application.
- Thank those who helped you during your job search.

RESOURCES

- Salary Wizard
 - <http://www.salary.com/>
- Salary Calculator
 - <http://www.homefair.com/homefair/calc/salcalc.html>
- Evaluating Your Benefits Package
 - <http://www.collegegrad.com/jobsearch/21-5.shtml>
- Job Offer Checklist
 - <http://www.collegegrad.com/jobsearch/jobofferchecklist.shtml>
- Women Don't Ask
 - <http://www.womendontask.com/>
- Salary Resources
 - <http://careers.washington.edu/resources/webresources>
- Job Offer & Salary Negotiation workshop
 - <http://careers.washington.edu/students/workshopsandclasses>
- Negotiating a Job Offer
 - <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/gradstud/negotiatepost.html>
- NACE Salary Survey of new college graduates
 - Available for viewing in MGH 134