

NEGOTIATING JOB OFFERS

Discussing and negotiating salary can be an uncomfortable area for many job seekers. Here are some strategies to make sure you're prepared for these conversations and getting paid what you deserve!

GENERAL TIPS

- **Do your research.** Use the checklist below to understand what might be a fair offer and what your options are during negotiations.
- **Wait for the employer to discuss salary.** The first number mentioned generally becomes the anchor point for negotiation, so it's helpful to see what the employer is planning to offer and working from there.
- **Hold on before accepting an offer.** The offer stage is the best time to negotiate, so while you may be excited about the job, asking for (at least) 24 hours to consider the offer gives you some time to ensure you're satisfied with the offer terms.
- **Get it in writing.** Once you and the employer have agreed on your job offer package, make sure to get it writing so you can always refer back to it in case of future questions.

NEGOTIATION CHECKLIST

1. What is a fair, market salary for the role?

Use the salary information websites below to determine salary rates:*

- **Pay Scale:** Provides helpful salary reports comparing salary to other roles in your market location (and includes important factors like benefits and years of experience).
- **Glassdoor:** Provides company reviews, salary reports, benefit reviews, and more.
- **LinkedIn Salary:** Provides detailed salary information and compensation type, based on industry, years of experience, company size, education level, and more.
- **Educate to Career:** Access free salary results based on college, location, and other factors.

**Salary rates vary based on industry, company size, years of experience, and location. Be sure to factor these details into your research so that you are comparing the right rates.*

2. What is the full offer package?

In addition to salary, there are many components of an offer package to factor in. Make a spreadsheet to consider the full value of your offer.

Typical offer packages can include:

- **Salary:** Use [paycheckcity.com](https://www.paycheckcity.com) to calculate what your take home pay would be after taxes. If offered an hourly rate, multiply the rate by 2080 to get a sense of what the full-time, annual salary would be (e.g. \$25/hr x 2080 = \$52,000/yr)
- **Benefits:** Health, dental, & vision (how much does the company cover for monthly premiums?)
- **Paid Time Off**
- **Retirement Contributions**
- **Professional Development Stipends**
- **Signing Bonus:** If increasing your salary isn't an option, will they consider a one-time bonus?
- **Stock Options**
- **[See more offer components](#)**

3. What are your income needs?

Create a budget to understand what income you need to manage your personal expenses.

- Try using [this personal budget worksheet](#) from [mymoney.gov](#)

4. What is your ASK?

Make two columns of As and Bs:

- **As** are what you REALLY WANT (higher salary, more vacation, etc)
- **Bs** are NICE TO HAVE (if A isn't possible, will they consider anything else on your list, e.g. more training opportunities, wellness stipend, etc.)

5. Determine your salary range

It can be helpful to have a salary range in mind, so that you know what you will ask for and what you may settle for.

- You will typically want to ask for more than the number you are willing to settle on (e.g. 10-20% more), in anticipation that the employer may counteroffer with a lower number.

6. Preparing for the request

Negotiating can be uncomfortable, so plan out your talking points so that you are ready for the conversation.

- **Begin on a positive note.** To open the conversation, share your excitement for the offer and opportunity.
- **Deliver your expectations.** Share your requests and explain the reasons you believe these requests are deserved.

Here is an example:

- “Thank you so much for this offer. I’m really excited about the opportunity and can really see myself working for [company name]. Though, I was wondering if there is any flexibility to get to a rate that is closer to \$x range? Given my research on market rate salaries and considering my qualifications for the roles [you can get specific about the value you hope to bring to the role], this seems like it would be a fair compensation.”

Here are some exploratory questions you can also try:

- What is the opportunity for increasing _____?
- Would you consider an offer within this range?
- Can we explore the possibility of _____?
- Is there anything you might be able to do?

If the employer can't meet your offer, here are some potential responses:

- “I understand there may be budget constraints for salary, but there are other benefits that are important to me, and I was wondering if we could discuss opportunities for professional development/training...or (whatever other benefit you're considering).”
- “I understand this may not be a salary you're willing to commit to right now, but would it be possible to reevaluate my rate in 6 months after I've had the opportunity to prove myself in this role?”

FINAL TIPS

- **Be confident and professional.** Don't make it personal—stick to the facts, numbers, and your possible contribution to the company.
- **Work together.** Don't think of negotiation as a competition; remember that you and the employer are working towards a common goal: to have you join the team as a valued employee.
- **Go for it!** Chances are that the employer won't take away your offer for simply asking to negotiate. Typically, the worst case scenario might be that they respond, “Unfortunately we can't meet your request”, and then you're left with the original offer.
- **Leave on a good note.** If you can't accept the offer because it is below your bottom line, still thank the employer for their time and consideration.



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