

# Salary Negotiation

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## Negotiation Preparation

### Salary Research

Before you attempt to negotiate salary with an employer, it is important to know what the market pay is in the field. Keep in mind that there can be wide variations in pay depending upon organization type, organization size, region of the country and experience level. A few places to research salary include:

- Informational interviews
- Professional association web sites
- Other advertised jobs
- Iseek – [www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org) (MN specific)
- Salary.com – [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com)
- Salary Expert – [www.salaryexpert.com](http://www.salaryexpert.com)

### Additional Preparation

In addition to conducting salary research, take the time to know the following before you negotiate. Each of these pieces of information will help you in the negotiation process:

1. What benefits are offered? How much are employees expected to contribute to these benefits?
2. What is the lowest offer you will take? Develop a budget so you know what is reasonable.
3. What are the key skills and experiences you bring to the position?
4. What are the exact responsibilities and tasks of the job?

## Salary Negotiation

### Why Negotiate?

In a survey of employers referenced in “How to Get Paid What You’re Worth” it was found that 100% of the employers said it is appropriate for job seekers to attempt to negotiate salary. Also, many employers surveyed indicated that their initial offer is less than they are willing to pay because they expect a candidate may negotiate. Starting with the highest salary possible is important because future raises are typically a percentage of your current salary. Lifetime earnings will be significantly higher for those who negotiate.

### When to Negotiate

The best time to negotiate salary is when you have received a job offer. If you start the topic of salary before an offer is made you may price yourself too high or too low.

### Negotiating Tips

- Always remain cordial, respectful and friendly!
- Remind the employer of the skills and experiences, not your financial needs and responsibilities.
- Ask for time to think about the offer, then call back to negotiate rather than doing it on the spot.
- Once you have an offer that you agree upon, get all parts of the offer in writing!
- Only accept an offer if you fully intend to stop your job search and work at this organization.

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## What to Say

### **If Salary is Brought Up Before an Offer**

It is not unusual for an employer to ask you to address salary expectations or past salary early in the interview process or in your application materials. We recommend that you not give specifics and that you try to get them to share salary information first so that you don't price yourself too high or too low.

### **A few strategies for written documents or interviews include:**

"My past work experience as a college student were part-time hourly work therefore my salary history is not included on my resume."

"After my raise in the next few months I expect to make between \$xx,xxx - \$xx,xxx."

"I would be happy to discuss the issue of salary as we get further along in our conversations about this opportunity. Right now I want to be sure that I am the right person for your organization."

"My salary requirements are negotiable and depend upon benefits as well as the responsibilities agreed upon at the time of a job offer."

"I would consider any reasonable offer."

"I assume a range has been set for this position and wonder what the organization has in mind?"

### **Negotiating the Offer**

Once an employer has offered you a position and disclosed the salary they plan to pay, you are then in a position to negotiate most openly and effectively.

### **A few simple phrases can get the negotiation started:**

"Is this offer negotiable?" or "How firm is that number?"

"What flexibility is there in this offer?"

"Would you tell me how you arrived at this compensation to make sure I understand the salary structure? I want this to work for both of us."

"Could you tell me a bit more about the benefits package for this position so I can understand the offer more completely?"

### **Your negotiation will be strongest when you give reason for requesting more money:**

"Based on my experience in this line of work and my current salary, I am wondering if you would consider an offer closer to \$xx,xxx?"

"Based on my research of salaries in this field and my understanding of the supervisory responsibilities required of this position I am wondering if you would consider a higher salary?"

"At this time I have been offered positions with your company and another organization. I have an offer with XYZ corporation for \$xx,xxx...would you be willing to match their offer?" \*\*Note - you should only do this if you actually have an offer in writing.

### **If they indicate that the salary is not negotiable:**

"Would it be possible to complete a performance review after six months and revisit compensation after you have had a chance to see my performance in this position?"

"Since it appears that the salary is non-negotiable, would you be willing to look at providing three weeks of vacation rather than two?"

"Once my training period is complete, would you be open to a flexible work schedule?"

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