
1. Prior to your interview

Research the average salary for the position you are interviewing for, so you become knowledgeable about the appropriate salary range. Search for average salary by position title and state (average salaries differ throughout the United States). Most employers will not negotiate for an entry-level position. However, if they do it is usually 10 percent or less of the original offer.

RESOURCES
Occupational Outlook Handbook: www.bls.gov/ooh
Salary.com
Wageproject.org
Glassdoor.com

2. Calculate

Calculate your net pay (how much you will take home each paycheck, after taxes) and determine your budget and how far your salary will take you.

RESOURCES
Net Pay Resource: Paycheckcity.com

3. Only negotiate salary once you have a job offer.

In case the employer mentions salary before the job offer:

• Bounce back the question to the interviewer “My salary expectation is aligned with industry standards.”

• Stall politely “Could we first see if I am the right candidate for the job and what I can contribute?”

• Avoid mentioning your last salary “This position is a step up from my current one based on how you described it, so I would anticipate ______ to ______?” (Range)

Avoid accepting a job offer right on the spot, unless you are absolutely sure that you want the position. You can ask for a few days to think about the offer before making a final decision on accepting/rejecting the offer and negotiating the salary.

Example Responses:

“I am very excited about this position; however, I have several more interviews scheduled over the next few days and I would like to be clear on my decision. Could I have until Friday to make a decision?”

“I would like an opportunity to discuss this with my family. Could I have until tomorrow to make a decision?”

~Over~
4. Negotiate

- If you decide to negotiate, you should do so as soon as possible.
- Make sure you have researched the average salary for this position.
- Show results from prior experience, and what you can contribute (e.g., increasing profits, decreasing costs, offering expertise).
- Be enthusiastic, polite and professional.
- State the top of your desired salary range and work toward a middle ground with the employer.
- Keep in mind that some salaries are non-negotiable (e.g., government positions).

Examples:

“After some research and thinking it over, I believe that the salary offer is a little low based upon my similar job responsibilities during my internship and proven leadership record. Is there anything that can be done to adjust this offer?”

“Actually we are very close to each other. Our gap is only ___ per month. Can we see what we can do about this?”

“Your competitor “x” is offering $______. Is there any way you could match that as I would prefer to work with you?”

5. Be ready for possible outcomes and decide how you will proceed.

- The employer may counter-offer right on the spot. Be prepared to make a decision!
- The employer may say they have to get back to you.
- The employer may say: “No, it is a fixed salary.”

6. Don’t forget to ask about and, if need be, negotiate your benefits.

Example:

“Thank you very much. This is very exciting. Can you let me know what the complete benefits and compensation package is made up of?”

Sometimes salary is non-negotiable … Remember that there are other things you might negotiate, or take into consideration as part of your package, such as:

- Insurance – Medical, Dental, Vision
- Tuition Remission
- 401k/Pension
- Flex Spending Account
- Vacation Days
- Flex Time
- Work From Home
- Overtime Pay (if hourly or non-exempt)

- Opportunity for Advancement
- Signing Bonus
- Timing of Annual Raise
- Company Car/Phone/Computer
- Stock Options
- Corporate Discounts
- Travel Expenses
- Professional Development
- Relocation Expenses (moving costs, hotel costs, relocation stipend/bonus)
- Health Club/Gym Membership
- MetroCard (for NYC)

Which answer will you choose?

If you were hoping for a higher salary, consider other positive factors before rejecting the offer:

- Is it your ideal job, company or industry?
- Are you going to gain valuable experience in your field?
- Are there opportunities to learn and advance within the company?