

NEGOTIATING OFFERS

A critical part in any job search is negotiation. Are you happy with the job offer you received? Do you think you are being fairly compensated for your work? This is where negotiation comes in.

WHEN SHOULD I START NEGOTIATING?

Typically, employers discuss salary or benefits after you've received an offer. However, some employers will bring up the topic earlier in the process - even as soon as the first interview or at the time of the application.

PRIOR TO NEGOTIATING:

1. **Do your research!** Look up the job title via resources online such as Glassdoor and reach out to people on LinkedIn regarding what a good pay range for something similar in their field and experience.
2. **Think about what you want and can expect.** What is a livable wage in your area or the area you're moving to? Then take the salary range you believe you can reasonably anticipate based on research.

NEGOTIATING YOUR OFFER

When you meet to discuss the offer, remember to show your interest and enthusiasm. Begin negotiating salary first. If you can win this, you should be willing to make compromises on other items such as benefits or retirement compensation. If you do not get the salary you are looking for, push harder for the other items you are interested in.

I'VE RECEIVED AN OFFER THAT ISN'T MY 1ST CHOICE:

You should never feel like you must give an answer immediately. Thank the employer, reiterate your interest in the position, and ask if you may have some time to think it over. Ask them to put the offer and the details of the compensation package in writing.

IS SALARY THE ONLY THING TO CONSIDER?

Nope! Think of things like sign-on bonuses, annual bonuses, profit sharing and stock options, moving cost coverage, tuition assistance, health insurance, disability and life insurance, mortgage assistance, vacation and sick days, and child care assistance. These are all fair game when negotiating job offers.

I HAVE RECEIVED MULTIPLE OFFERS. CAN I NEGOTIATE THEM AGAINST ONE ANOTHER?

Yes, but be careful. This strategy works best when the offers received come from competitors within the same industry. If the market rate for the jobs are similar, then telling one employer that you have received a higher offer from another may encourage them to match it. And never lie to a company and tell them you have received a higher offer when you haven't—assume that they will call your bluff and ask for a copy of the offer letter.

WHAT OTHER THINGS SHOULD I CONSIDER FROM A JOB OFFER?

Accepting a job is a personal decision, and involves following your instincts and taking that leap of faith. But some other things you should consider are: potential career paths within the company, company culture, the people you'll work with, networking opportunities in your field, and the geographic region where the job is located.

WHAT IF I WANT TO DECLINE A JOB OFFER?

If you've evaluated a job offer and decided it is not the right fit for you, you have the option to decline the offer. A polite letter declining a job offer will help you maintain a positive relationship with the employer. In the letter, be sure to express appreciation and clearly state you cannot accept the position.

