

Negotiating a Job Offer

Before you accept any job offer make sure you thoroughly review all the details of the offer and be ready to negotiate if necessary. Keep in mind that a job offer is more than just salary and that you should also be evaluating benefits and work/life balance to see the whole picture and to make a decision that is right for you.

When to Negotiate

Salary is typically a topic you will want to wait to bring up until an official offer has been made.

- Let the employer make the first move; negotiate after an offer is made, but *before* you accept it.
- Get the offer in writing so you can take your time to review it carefully; ask for clarification on anything you don't understand.

Research Salary

While you shouldn't bring up salary before you get an official offer that doesn't mean you shouldn't be prepared for the question to come up in the interview process. Before your interview:

- Research the average salary for your job targets and try to find the industry's salary norms by looking for job postings with salaries, finding competitors' salaries, conducting informational interviews (if time allows), and visiting company websites.
- Evaluate your salary requirements based on how much you need to earn (develop a budget) and the cost of living in the job location. There are a lot of different cost of living calculators out there but here's one to get you started: <https://www.payscale.com/cost-of-living-calculator>.
- Based on the research you conduct, develop a salary range with high, low, and middle expectations.

Use this information to develop an argument as to why you may deserve a higher salary. Be realistic about your experience and skill level and prepare to negotiate based on your skills and experience, with examples.

Consider all Factors

Evaluate the entire package; even if the salary itself is non-negotiable, other fringe benefits might be, including:

- Start date
- Vacation/sick/disability leave
- Stock options
- Relocation expenses
- Insurance costs
- Tuition reimbursement
- Professional memberships/conferences
- Retirement plans
- Signing bonuses
- Parking passes

Be prepared that the employer may be unwilling to negotiate and you will have to decide whether or not you will still accept the offer. Make this decision before you begin the negotiation process as you may have to make a quick decision once the process has been started.

How to Negotiate

Once you have received the offer, review it, and ask if there is any room for negotiation. If there is, present your argument for a higher salary or other fringe benefits. If you present an unreasonable ask you may end up hurting yourself, so be sure to use your research! Once you receive a fair offer finalize the agreement and be sure to accept or decline the offer both verbally and in writing. The negotiation process should typically be done over the phone however an email may be acceptable depending on the circumstances. Below are a couple of examples to help guide you through a negotiation. Keep in mind these will not work for every situation and should be modified to fit your needs.

Email: If you are going to email this is a tactful way to give the employer a chance to offer you a higher salary or mention additional perks if a salary increase is not an option. Keep in mind that the recruiter still may call you to have a conversation over the phone.

“Thank you for offering me the Inside Sales position. I would like to express again how excited I am to begin working for your company.

Before I can accept however, I would like to discuss the matter of compensation. As we discussed in the interviews, I have two more years of experience and formal training than you required in the job description. I have also demonstrated my capabilities in my last position at my previous company by increasing sales in my division by 10% and personally landed several \$10,000 sales deals. With my experience, I would be happy to accept at a base salary of \$XX,XXX.

I can certainly see a future for myself at the company, and I’m confident that I can bring a lot of value. I look forward to hearing from you soon.”

•••

Phone Conversation: A salary negotiation may take place over the phone, but it is still important when negotiating to outline very specifically why you are demanding a different offer. Be sure to highlight your skills/accomplishments and be prepared to adapt depending on the situation and conversation.

“Thank you, I appreciate the time to speak with you about this. Based on my research, a salary of \$47,500, \$2000 more than the original offer, would be more in line with the market average. I believe my education, skills, and experience are of value to the company and would make the return on your investment worth the \$2000 increase. During my 2 internships I gained experience working exclusive on advertising campaigns. Because of this experience, it will significantly reduce the amount of training needed to prepare me for the job and I will continually go out of my way to deliver excellent results.”

Bringing Your Search to a Close

Once you have accepted an offer, consider the other organizations that you are in process with and kindly close any outstanding applications. If you find yourself navigating multiple offers at once, we recommend setting up an appointment with a Career Coach as every student's situation is unique. Nonetheless, we always encourage continuous communication with all organizations that are considering you for employment especially when rejecting offers, it is a small world, and you don't want to burn bridges by "ghosting" an employer.

Negotiating on the Job

As you gain tenure with a company you may be able to ask for a salary increase in certain situations, like being assigned additional responsibilities or gaining new certifications/degrees. You negotiate within a position using the same information provided about negotiating an initial offer. Research, prepare, and then negotiate.

If you need assistance negotiating a job offer visit our [website](#) to set up an appointment with a Career Coach.