

SALARY NEGOTIATION DOs and DON'Ts

As you go through the job search process, it is important to do research to know what an average starting salary for the positions you are applying to, in your location. After doing this research, you should have a target figure in mind for your starting salary. Your Bottom Line advisor and professionals in your field can help you navigate the salary negotiation process.

DO know what you are being offered and if there is room for negotiation. Make sure to understand the complete benefits package you are being offered. Ask about the timeline for performance appraisals and raises. If the organization has other bonuses (signing or yearly), incentive programs (tuition reimbursement), or profit sharing, your base salary may be increased substantially. If you are interested in negotiating your salary you can start a conversation by asking the employer “Would you be open to negotiating my salary?” Certain roles, such as rotational programs, are not open to negotiation and some companies are not able to negotiate based on their budget.

DO know your worth and show it. It’s important to show up with an idea in mind of what you want to be paid (at least a range). Know your bottom line, and what is unacceptable for salary, benefits and overall compensation. Be aware of your strengths, achievements and the value you will bring to the workplace.

DO know the data. If you want to make a case for the highest level of compensation possible, it’s important to know the research backwards and forward. You can do salary research by talking with professionals in the field, and online:

- www.salary.com
- [America’s Career InfoNet](http://AmericasCareerInfoNet.com)
- Payscale.com
- www.glassdoor.com
- [Job Search Intelligence](http://JobSearchIntelligence.com)

DO let your employer bring up salary first. Try to delay salary negotiation as long as possible, and don’t name a number unless you absolutely have to. You don’t want to make an offer that is lower than your employer is willing to pay off the bat without having showed them your passion and value that you would bring to the workplace.

DO thank the employer for their offer, get your offer in writing and keep all communications professional.

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DON’T fail to conduct research ahead of time. Since the best way to secure a high salary is to arm yourself with information, the worst thing you can do is fail to prepare. Never walk into a job interview without doing the legwork first.

DON’T accept a figure you aren’t comfortable with out of fear. And don’t apologize for the figure you came up with either. Be patient and persistent in a professional way. Don’t accept an offer if it is below your bottom line.

DON'T forget to negotiate all terms, not just your salary. If a company isn't able to negotiate your salary, you can ask if they would be open to negotiating other benefits, such as time off, commuter benefits, or professional development funds. Think about what you would like to negotiate beforehand in order to be prepared.

DON'T accept or reject a position based solely on the salary being offered. There is more to a job than its salary and perks; you have to make sure the entire package is a good fit. Keep in mind that you should only spend the time negotiating for a position that you are invested in accepting.

DON'T accept an offer on the spot unless it's exactly what you want. Thank the employer and take time to consider the offer before you try to begin negotiations.