



## Salary Negotiation

### Is Salary Negotiation Really Necessary?

Whether it is appropriate to negotiate salary for a given job depends on a number of factors: the size and culture of the organization, how well the candidate fits the employer's needs, and how difficult the position is to fill.

In the corporate sector, many companies expect potential employees to negotiate for salary and benefits, and will not make their best offer first. Some may even think less of candidates who don't negotiate. Others will not have the flexibility to negotiate, especially for entry-level positions. Be prepared for either situation.

In non-profit organizations, salaries and benefits are usually more modest, and the employer may not be able to improve on the original offer. It is always okay to ask if there is flexibility in the offer.

### Know Your Worth

A successful salary negotiation depends on your being well informed about salary ranges for your target jobs.

- Use websites that list jobs in your field as well as employer sites to research salary ranges.
- Talk to friends, professors and people working in your field to learn about current salaries.
- Check industry and professional association websites for salary surveys; go to [www.asaecenter.org](http://www.asaecenter.org) then click on People & Groups/Online Directories/Gateway to Associations.
- Visit salary websites:  
[www.salaryexpert.com](http://www.salaryexpert.com) See "Free Salary Calculator" [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org) Click on "salary info"  
[www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com) See "Salary Wizard" [www.jobstar.org](http://www.jobstar.org) Click on "salary info"

### Understand Your Priorities

Go into an interview knowing your requirements in advance: what is your ideal salary and what is the minimum you will accept? If the final offer is lower than you expected, you can request perks to compensate, for example:

- Flexible hours
- Early performance review, perhaps at the 6 month mark, for possible early raise
- Training or tuition reimbursement

### Timing Is Important

During the first interview, your job is to sell yourself to the employer, emphasizing your interest in the organization and your specific qualifications for the position. At this point, your goal is to get an offer. When the interviewer asks if you have any questions, this is NOT the time to ask about salary.

Likewise, if the employer asks you about salary, it's best to postpone the discussion. By naming a salary so soon, you could disqualify yourself by asking for too much or shortchange yourself by asking for too little.

Instead, try to find out the intended range for the position. Or you could say something like "I would be happy to discuss my salary requirements once I know more about the position requirements and the benefits package."

If the interviewer insists on your providing a figure, offer the range you discovered in your research and ask "is that in your ballpark?" to see where the employer stands. Or try a general statement like "I am very interested in this position and I'm sure we could come to agreement on a salary within your range."

### Considering the Offer

Never accept an offer on the spot. It's expected that you would take a day or more to think over all aspects of the job, including the salary and benefits. Most employers will respect your desire not to rush into this important decision. If you haven't received detailed information on the benefits package, now is the time to request it.

Always express enthusiasm first when you receive an offer. If the salary is low, this is the time to ask if there is room to negotiate. You may end up in a salary discussion at that moment or in a future call. If there is no flexibility in the offer, it's still worthwhile to take some time to make your decision.



### Discussing Salary

During your salary negotiation, focus on presenting a rational case for your requests. Avoid reacting emotionally. Be professional, direct, and non-confrontational. Your financial needs or wants are irrelevant to an employer; what matters is your ability to make a case for why your skills and experience make you worth a higher salary. This should not be an adversarial process; remember, you are speaking to people you hope to work with. The ability to listen well and express yourself clearly in a negotiation will make you more attractive as a job candidate.

No offer is really final until you have received it in writing. Be sure to request written documentation of the terms of the offer, especially if you have negotiated anything out of the ordinary.

### Salaries for Top Jobs for 2010 Bachelor's Degree recipients

These rankings are based on the number of offers reported, according to results of the National Association of Colleges & Employers' Spring 2010 *Salary Survey*.

Business Majors		Sciences Majors	
Accounting/Auditing	\$49,599	Research (Technical/Scientific)	\$33,020
Financial Treasury Analysis	\$53,887	Teaching	\$32,463
Management Trainee (entry-level)	\$41,594	Project Engineering	\$58,203
Consulting	\$57,518	Engineering Majors	
Sales	\$43,924	Field Engineering	\$57,272
Investment Banking	\$53,596	Manufacturing/Industrial Engineering	\$58,696
Liberal Arts Majors		Process Engineering (Chemical)	\$66,561
Teaching	\$32,328	Systems/Programming Engineering	\$60,097
Sales	\$43,924	Consulting	\$59,350
Management Trainee (entry-level)	\$41,594	Computer Science Majors	
Social Work	\$36,300	Software Design & Development	\$68,277
Law Enforcement	\$36,333	Computer Programming	\$58,656
Health Science Majors		System Analysis & Design	\$51,885
Registered Nurse	\$46,857		