

# Salary Negotiation

# Guide

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# Steps To Prepare

## Step 1: Assess the Wants and Needs (Yours and the Employer's!)

- YOURS: What are your non-negotiables? (deal-breakers)
  - Think in terms of salary, yes... but also consider cost of living, insurance, retirement, vacation, physical work space, etc.
  - Evaluate the offer as an entire package.
- THE EMPLOYER'S: What does the organization want out of a candidate? (expectations)
  - Do you meet these? Do you exceed these?
  - Know what you value and what they value, so that you can make effective trade-offs. A trade-off is a request for more of one thing, in exchange for less of something else.

Know your worth (remember your research)

- Before you share your salary expectations with an employer, think holistically about what you're earning presently, including salary, bonuses and benefits. Then, use the research you've done to set a realistic target for what kind of compensation you want in your next job. What base salary are you looking for? Which benefits do you value the most? What other perks interest you?

## Step 2: Research

Company first (should be done before the application stage, definitely before the interviewing stage, and absolutely before any interview!)

Rely on top 3 sites: [glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com), [salary.com](https://www.salary.com) ("what am I worth?" salary estimator), [payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com)

- The New York state law requiring employers to disclose expected compensation ranges in advertisements for jobs, promotions, and transfers took effect on September 17, 2023. The law requires employers with four or more employees to disclose the minimum and maximum annual salary or hourly wage in advertisements for jobs, promotions, and transfers, including in electronic job postings.
- Several cities and counties like Cincinnati and Jersey City, N.J., have their own pay transparency requirements.
- Another 16 states and Washington D.C. have considered pay range transparency laws in the 2023 state legislative session,

Remember your circle: Talk to someone in the company to gain information (e.g., alumni, colleagues, friends, mentors, friends of friends).

- What salary range should I expect? What is the level of pay for similar positions?
- What do you wish you had negotiated up front?
- What is the review cycle? What are the opportunities for career advancement?

# Steps To Prepare

## Step 3: Make informed and reasonable requests

This might look like:

- Asking informed questions.
- If you have constraints, share them.
- Focus on “we”; don’t give a list of demands.
- Be reasonable & rational!

Remember: there may be different stages (timing) during the interview process where it is “appropriate” to discuss salary:

- Know your worth and the forms of compensation that matter most to you.
- Use salary resources to study the current trends and learn about the range for this job in your city.
- Give a range, not a specific number (usually within \$5000 - \$10,000.) Frame the conversation about salary around what is fair and competitive.
- Don’t try to negotiate until you have a formal job offer.

You (typically) don’t have to answer salary questions right away

- The requirements of a job as well as the other kinds of compensation an employer offers, like benefits, equity and bonuses, are important to take into consideration. When you are first asked, “What are your salary expectations?” it’s ok to delay answering. Here are some responses that can help you continue the conversation and get more information:
- Example 1: “I’m looking for a competitive offer that includes benefits and other kinds of compensation, but I’d like to know more about the specifics of what this job requires first.” (This answer is good for most situations.)
- Example 2: “Over the course of my career, I’ve worked in several different areas, across different levels. I’d like to learn more about what this role entails as well as the benefits and other forms of compensation you offer.” (This may be a better answer if you’re transitioning to a new career track.)

Give a range, not an exact number (usually within \$5000 - \$10,000.)

- If you’ve delayed answering the question and the interviewer asks you again, it’s time to respond. Avoid giving a specific number. Instead, you can provide a range. Cite your research and frame the conversation as being about what is fair rather than what you want. Here are some examples of how to answer:
- For “new professionals”
  - “I understand from my research and experience that low 50s to mid-60s is the competitive range for this role in this industry and city.”
  - “In this environment and in this location, my research indicates that mid-50s to low-70s is a reasonable range.”
- For the more experienced candidate
  - “Based on my experience in this field and my research on the current market, I understand that mid 70 to low 90s is a competitive range.”

# Phrases to Help With Salary Negotiation

## When you get an offer:

- “I’m really excited about the possibility of working here! Thank you for the offer; how much time do I have to look this over and is there a good time for us to get together again to go over questions?”
- “Thank you for the offer. May I think about it over the next week (or overnight / over the weekend) and give you an answer on X date?”

## When you received a lower salary than expected:

- “How was the salary determined?” “Is there any flexibility?”
- “I was expecting X due to my (insert unique skills / strengths / experience here). Is there anything else you can do, or perhaps add to the package?”
- “I am really excited to work here, and I know that I will bring a lot of value due to my X. I appreciate the initial offer, but was really expecting it to be a bit higher. Can we look at a salary of Y for this position?”
- “All things being equal, I would prefer to join this organization rather than my alternative. But because there is such a discrepancy in salary, it is a difficult decision.”
- “My understanding is that X is a typical starting salary range for this position. Can we revise the salary to reflect that range?”

## Responses to “This is the salary we budgeted and we feel it’s fair.”

- “I understand where you are coming from, and just want to reiterate my enthusiasm for working here. I think my skills are perfectly suited and you will see very quickly that they are worth Y.”
- “Maybe I haven’t conveyed enough the value I think I can bring to your organization. I really feel that I am coming in at a higher level than what you are offering. Did you note I have (insert unique skills / strengths / experience here).”
- “I understand your constraints around the starting salary. I’m sure I will demonstrate value quickly; is there a way we can include a 6-month salary review in this offer?”
- “I understand your constraints. Can we look at the other aspects of this offer; I’m sure there is a way to make this work for everyone.”

## For questions on work/life balance:

- “What is the policy on flextime?” Or “Is there a possibility for flextime?”
- “Because of X, I would love the potential for flextime. Is this a possibility?”

## For questions on continuing education:

- “What is your policy around continuing education?”
- “I was hoping to attend X conference next year; can we include that in this offer?”
- “There are some helpful courses I was hoping to take to augment my experience. Can we include tuition reimbursement for these courses in the offer?”

## When you cannot meet on an agreement:

- “I’d love to join this organization / team, but unfortunately at this time the offer does not meet my needs (or, at this time I’m not sure this is a good fit). I’d love to stay in touch and potentially we can work together in the future.”
- “Thank you for the time and the offer. Unfortunately, I have found something better-suited to where I am right now, but I would love to stay in touch for the future.”

**Be reasonable, honest, and solution-oriented. Remember your value!**

# Resources

## Resources Referenced:

[Negotiating Worksheet](#) - UC Berkeley School of Information  
[How To Talk About Salary in a Job Interview | Indeed.com](#)

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