JOB OFFERS GUIDE

Evaluate the offer.
Once you receive an offer, thank the employer and ask for time to consider the offer. This is your chance to evaluate how well the offer fits with your values, skills, interests, personality, and living requirements. Rank order what criteria are most important to you and examine how well the position and organization match your criteria. This may include:

- Ethics
- Advancement opportunities
- Helping others
- Location
- Work hours
- Team work vs. independence
- Salary
- Creativity
- Job security
- Learning potential
- Adventure/excitement
- Company prestige
- Travel
- Job stress

Be prepared to negotiate the offer.
Only enter into negotiations if you plan on accepting the offer if your request is approved. Employers expect to negotiate with potential employees. In a recent survey cited in the Wall Street Journal, 90% of human resources professionals say that job candidates can negotiate their salary. The key to negotiating an offer is:
1. To do your research
2. To be prepared to state sound reasons for the negotiation and
3. To communicate with professionalism and tact.

Do your research.
Research the market value of the job. Take into account the geographical location and the level of the job. There are many resources out there for finding realistic salary expectations.
- Network: Talk to other employees in the company or ask other employers.
- Call Around: Compensation analysts, state employment offices, and professional trade associations can all be of assistance.
- Read Up: Read trade journals or books.

Research your personal worth.
Consider your skills, education, experience, and accomplishments. After getting to know the company by reading company literature and talking to employees, be prepared to recite your list of attributes! Match your skills to what you researched about the company goals.

The Golden Rule of salary negotiation is to avoid talking money until you have a job offer.
Make them want you first. The power in negotiations is with the employer until they make you an offer. At that time, the power shifts in your favor. This is the time to negotiate. Do not talk about salary unless the employer brings it up. If salary is brought up before you get an offer,
1. Deflect the conversation onto other matters or
2. Get them to name a number first or
3. Give a range

Deflecting.
The object here is to not directly answer their questions about your salary requirements, and instead, focus the conversation on your fit for the position. You do not want to be ruled out prematurely. Have you ever bought something you couldn’t afford? If they are sure you’re the person for the job, they may be willing to pay more than they planned for the position. Practice saying these deflecting phrases until you are comfortable:
“Until I’m asked to consider a definite position, I couldn’t say.”
“It would all depend on the details of the position. Until I learn more, it’s hard to name a salary.”
“I can be flexible on salary. I like to consider the whole package of benefits and all of the details of the position.”
“I’d prefer to wait to discuss salary until we know that I’m a serious candidate for the position.”
“I’m sure we can come up with something comparable to market value. Can we come back to this later?”
“I’d like to first learn more about the responsibilities of the job.”
“I know we’ll be able to come up with something fair for both sides.”

Reflecting the question back to them.
The object here is to get them to name their range first so you know what ballpark they are in. Try phrases such as:
• “What range did YOU have in mind?”
• “What is typical for this level position in your company?”
• “I am aware of the market range in general for these types of position. What range does your company pay?”

As a last resort, give them a range.
When asked what salary you expect, you could simply answer “comparable to market value.” If you are forced to say a number, give a ballpark range slightly above market value. Go for the top mark of the range. (You need to have done your research by now.) Something like: “Similar positions would pay ___ range, but let’s clarify the duties and responsibilities of this job and make sure I’m the person you want.”

Negotiating the offer.
After you have reflected on the offer and before you negotiate, clarify with yourself what you want, which points you want to negotiate, and have a clear rationale for asking for more. Know in advance your “walk away” point – the point at which you will say no to the offer if your criteria are not met. Also know what it will take for you to accept the offer.

When you discuss the offer, begin by thanking them again for the offer. You can start by clarifying any questions you had. If you have clear criteria in mind, you can state a counter offer. Career expert Don Asher offers a more general response to a salary offer: “I really had in mind more than that. What can we do?” As long as you negotiate respectfully, the employer is unlikely to rescind the offer. If they simply say no to your counter offer, then the ball is back in your court to decide if you will accept their original offer.

Areas of compensation.
Numerous other benefits of the job can be negotiated, not just salary. Some of the many other negotiable areas include:

- Bonus or Stock Options
- Company Car or Parking
- Health Insurance
- Retirement Plans
- Vacation or Sick Leave
- Professional Development
- Additional Company Resources
- Sales Commissions
- Relocation Expenses
- Overtime