

Whether you are trying to get a raise in salary in your current job or trying to negotiate a package from a prospective job, effective negotiation skills are vital.

Situational Preparation

Before you approach the table, make sure you evaluate if your value warrants a stronger package.

- If seeking a new job: Do you have the skills, qualifications, and/or experience that is valued?
- If seeking a raise in your current job: Do your contributions reflect a high level of performance helping the organization achieve its goals?
- If seeking a new job with prior experience earning more money: Can you demonstrate your interest in the organization or job beyond salary?, You may need to emphasize your salary requirements are “open” or “negotiable” to prevent getting eliminated based on salary.

Increasing Your Price Tag

Ensure that you are regarded as skillful and professional with a positive and collaborative attitude by sharing from past performance.

- Performance reviews and evaluations by former employers can provide documentation of your performance and can provide you with good terms to use in describing yourself.
- Feedback from customers, clients, and co-workers indicate the reputation you project.
- Courses, seminars and workshops attended show your commitment to professional development.

Research

To negotiate a good salary, you will need to do some comparative shopping:

- Check salary surveys and competitor’s pay scales. (salary.com gives good comps by level and region)
- Know your walk-away point, as well as your target figure going in
- Know the going rate in the industry, region, or career area
- Know your current financial needs.
- Understand how your experience and expertise measure against the company’s need
- Try to find out the salary of the prior employee
- Understand the impact the position has on the company's profits and/or mission

Perks and Benefits

While a strong salary determines future raises, other benefits play a big role in the evaluation of a total package. Some other things to consider are:

- Life/Health/Medical Insurance
- Matching Retirement Funds
- Professional Development & Conferences
- Advancement and Leadership Programs
- First Authorship in Publications
- Lab Equipment
- Administrative Support
- Signing Bonuses and/or Annual Bonuses
- Relocation and Moving Allowance
- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Holidays, personal days, leave policies
- Reimbursable items necessary to do the job - company car, laptop, iPhone, ...

Negotiation Tips

- In a job interview, remember, you are worth more at the end of the interview when you have created a demand for your skills than at the beginning. Save discussion of salary until the offer is made.
- Talk *quality* first, *price* second. Lead with a discussion of what you have to offer. Show your worth, prove your value, and demonstrate why you think you deserve more money.
- State salary requirements using a range rather than a specific figure (usually a \$2-10,000 range depending on your skills and experience).
- Don't accept an offer in haste. Ask for time to review the offer and ask for the offer in writing.
- The best time to begin a salary negotiation discussion is at the time of the job offer.
- Think win-win. Act as if you are both working on the same problem, searching for a common solution that is mutually beneficial.
- Keep discussions professional and positive. You are demonstrating the type of employee you are going to be.

To view a CareerBytes video on “Negotiating an Offer”, go to:
www.careerservices.uab.edu.