



## **How to Negotiate Salary**

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So, you nailed the interview, but at the end, the recruiter asks, “what kind of salary are you looking for?” Now what? Negotiating salary is an art form. You’ve got to know what you’re worth, what the company can afford, and whether they want you enough to pay you what you require.

Before you begin a job search, decide on a range. Start by researching what professionals with your level of education and experience in your industry are paid on average. You can do so on websites like [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com). Keep in mind, these are usually national averages, and may need to be raised or lowered based on where the job is located.

A range instead of an exact number is your best option, because it prevents you from being pushed into a lower salary, but also dissuades a potential employer from pricing you out of a position if your expectation is too high. If you find that the average salary for the type of job you’re seeking is \$42,000 then ask for a salary in the range \$40,000 to \$45,000. Also, keep in mind that you do not want to ask for a salary that is too high, because you might price yourself out of the job or if you do get hired, you might be on the top of the list for layoffs if you’re making more than your colleagues who are doing the same work as you.

Many professionals insist that the first person to mention salary will lose. If you are asked in an interview what you want to be paid, ask in return, “what is the range for this position?” If you ask this question in return, it prevents the interviewer from pricing you out of the job immediately, and if the interviewer’s reply is higher than your expectations, then you’ve just earned yourself a higher salary. Once you have heard the interviewer’s answer you can judge whether that range is appropriate for your level of experience and education based on the research you’ve done, and then reply to the interviewer by either saying that that is the range you are looking for, or that you are expecting to be paid in the \$x to \$y range.

If the employer seems to have an adverse reaction to your desired range, remain positive about the job, and offer options. Though an employer may be unable to negotiate beyond a pre-determined range for the position, they might be able to negotiate the terms of the rest of your compensation package. Perhaps they will instead provide you with more vacation time, bonuses or flex time. If you push too hard for your pre-determined salary, you risk losing the job altogether.

Taking a job should make good career sense before it makes good economic sense, so look at the big picture. Will taking this job with a lower salary than you expected make a big difference in your career in the long run? If yes, then consider taking the lower salary.