



Salary Negotiation for New Hires

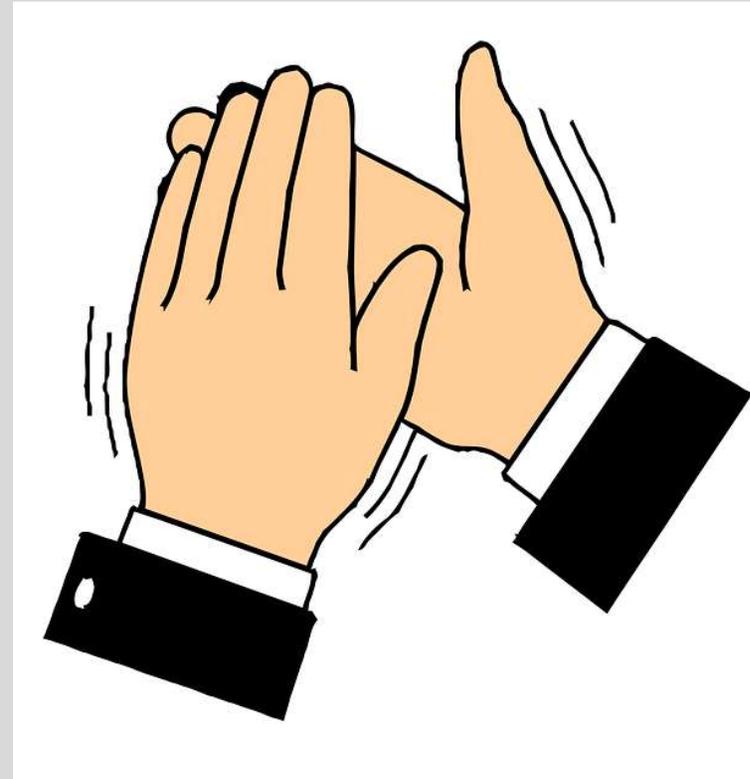
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Congratulations!

You've received a
job offer!



Initial Job Offer

- Most likely an HR representative offered you the job over the phone. Request to receive the offer in writing.
- If you are unsure about any part of the offer, don't accept it right away. It is reasonable to tell the employer that you'd like some time to consider their offer.
 - ✓ Thank them and confirm your interest in the position.
 - ✓ Say that you would like some time to consider their offer.
 - ✓ Tell them that you'll respond by a specified date.
 - ✓ If the salary seems too low, you may ask the contact for the organization's salary range for the position.
 - ✓ Follow up no later than the time you promised.

Should You Negotiate a Higher Salary?

- If you already know that you'll want to negotiate the salary, you may ask, "Is this negotiable?"
- If the salary is the only thing keeping you from accepting the job, at least *consider* negotiating a higher salary.
- Raises or merit increases are typically a percentage of your base salary: a higher starting salary yields higher raise.
- It will likely be a year or longer before you'll be eligible for a raise.
- It is often harder to motivate your employer to give you a higher salary later.
- Your salary history influences how much you'll be offered in your next position.

Should You Negotiate a Higher Salary?

Most employers won't withdraw a job offer simply because you try to negotiate a higher salary.

- ✓ The employer picked you for the job and doesn't want to start over with someone else.
- ✓ A *good* hiring manager won't be upset with you, as long as your expectations are reasonable and your approach is respectful.
- ✓ In most cases, negotiating demonstrates that you've researched the position and can advocate for yourself.
- ✓ Employers want to know why you're turning down an offer.



Should You Negotiate a Higher Salary?

- A counter offer is likely to be rejected when
 - ✓ The base salary is truly non-negotiable.
For instance, stipends for many fellowships or trainee positions are often non-negotiable
 - ✓ You have little or no work experience in this field and the employer is paying an appropriate entry-level salary
- Don't negotiate if you have no intention of accepting the job, for other reasons.
- Don't negotiate for its own sake.



What is a “Reasonable” Salary?

You'll first need to research salary ranges for this position.
Consider the following:

- ✓ Position title
- ✓ Job sector (government, nonprofit, for profit)
- ✓ City or geographic area
- ✓ Your education
- ✓ Your years of relevant work experience
- ✓ How closely you fit the job description
- ✓ Your salary history
- ✓ Responsibilities of this position
 - Do they match the job title?

Researching Salaries

- Ask contacts in the industry--especially those with a similar title and who work in the same city or geographic area.
- Search the organization's website to see if they post salary ranges for their positions.
- Online references
 - ✓ Occupational Outlook Handbook: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>
 - ✓ Texas Tribune.org: <https://www.texastribune.org/>
- Online Salary Calculators
 - ✓ Indeed.com: <https://www.indeed.com/salaries>
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Preparing to Negotiate

- Determine a target range for your salary.
 - ✓ What minimum salary do you think is fair, based on your qualifications?
 - ✓ What amount exceeds your expectations?
- Review your job search priorities.
 - ✓ How important is salary in comparison with other priorities?
 - ✓ Are you established in this field or at entry-level?
 - ✓ What unique and valuable opportunities can this job provide?
 - ✓ Have you received other job offers or are other offers on the horizon?
- Consider any prior discussions about salary with this employer.

Preparing to Negotiate

- If you find that salary cannot be increased, you may find other elements of the job are negotiable.
- If you've received other job offers, politely mentioning this during your negotiation may motivate this employer to match your salary expectations.
- In most cases, you may either call and/or write (send via e-mail) your counter offer.
- Choose the method of communication that you are most comfortable with or that you feel will yield the best outcome for you.

Putting It Into Words

- Address the person who made the initial offer.
- Express your thanks for job offer.
- Say something positive about the opportunity, your enthusiasm for the job, and/or why you want to accept the offer.
- State that you've researched salaries for this position in this city/area.
- Provide the salary range that you think is fair.
- Remind them of your qualifications that make this counter offer reasonable and what you can bring to this organization.
- End with a positive statement. Ex: You look forward to a response, are eager to start this job.

Putting it Into Words: What Not to Say

When negotiating a higher salary, don't mention your personal finances such as mortgages, rent, student loans, or other debts. These are not your future--or current--employer's responsibilities.



Avoid *“I deserve”* or *“I need.”*

Putting It Into Words

Other Tips

- If you've received another job offer, you may let this employer know that you're considering other offers.
- Maintain a positive and respectful attitude.
- Don't approach the negotiation as a "battle of wills."
- Don't be confrontational or arrogant.
- Keep in mind, that the employer likely already knows what the typical salary range for the position is.
- Remind the employer of what *they* will lose if you turn down the job.

Putting It Into Words

Sample Letter

Dear [Contact Name],

Thank you for offering me the position of program manager for the Biosafety and Infectious Diseases Training Initiative at the UTHealth School of Public Health. I find your training program in emerging infectious diseases to be quite impressive, and I am eager to begin working on this project.

I would like to address the base salary of \$58,000 in your offer, however. Based on my research of similar positions in Houston, I believe a salary in the mid- \$60,000s is consistent with my two years of experience as a graduate assistant, my masters-level education in occupational health, and my earlier four years of experience as a program coordinator at UTHealth.

I do want to accept this position and hope that you are able increase the base salary in your offer. I look forward to your reply. Please let me know if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Putting It Into Words

What if you have little to no prior work experience in the field and find the salary is too low to be acceptable?

- ✓ You can first “test the waters” by first asking if the salary is negotiable?
- ✓ You can try sending a counter offer pointing out the typical entry-level salary range for the position. Highlight your relevant skills, education, and other unique qualifications.

Employer's Response

- If the employer refuses to revise their offer...
or, if you receive a revised offer, but still not up to your expectations...
 - ✓ Did the employer provide a justification for this salary?
 - ✓ Does the justification seem reasonable?
- Consider following up with a 2nd attempt.
 - ✓ Will you turn down this job if they won't meet your salary expectations?
- If you're thinking of staying in your current job, you may be able to use this job offer to negotiate a higher salary with your current employer.

Other Parts of the Job Offer

Other elements of a compensation package can be negotiated besides salary. If the employer lacks funds to increase the salary, they may be able to improve elements of the job offer such as

- ✓ Relocation expenses
- ✓ Start-up or professional development funds
- ✓ Office, lab, or project space
- ✓ Lab or other equipment
- ✓ Employer-paid mobile devices
- ✓ Reserved or free parking
- ✓ Employment start date
- ✓ Supplemental pay or bonus
- ✓ Paid time off/vacation
- ✓ Job title
- ✓ Gym membership
- ✓ Discounted childcare or onsite childcare



Final Words

- There are really no “rules” for negotiating a salary.
- Carefully consider the job offer, your career goals, and your financial situation when trying to decide next steps.
- Ask questions if you need to confirm or clarify any elements of your compensation package.
- Do what you think is best for you!

Questions? Thank You!

For further assistance or to make an appointment with our office, contact SPHCareerServices@uth.tmc.edu.



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