

Salary Expectations

When an employer asks you for a salary expectation, make sure you have done your homework. Prior to your interview, you should review sites like <http://www.salary.com> for salary information about your field and location and compare salaries listed for similar job postings in your local area or the area in which you have applied.

Other salary considerations:

- Present a salary range rather than a specific figure
- Understand the benefits and perks available. An employer who pays for continuing education may be a better option than one who pays more initially but does not offer professional development opportunities
- Think about potential for growth, promotion, access to a mentor, or other professional development opportunities
- Make sure any questions or requests you make are reasonable

Offer(s) and Acceptance

Before accepting an offer, gather information, ask plenty of questions, anticipate other offers, and contact other companies with which you have interviewed to see if they would match or exceed your current offer.

Also, be sure to...

- ✓ Respond in a timely manner when an offer of employment is extended
- ✓ Ask for a written offer if it has not been provided
- ✓ Inform employers of your acceptance or decline of their offer(s)
- ✓ Consider your offer(s) carefully and speak with trusted advisors who can guide you
- ✓ If you need additional time to decide, ask for an extension

Other Things to Think About...

You can ask for a reasonable amount of time to respond to an offer. Try suggesting a time frame or asking the employer when they need a response. Tell them you want to make a responsible decision. Unless the employer has asked you to keep the details of your offer confidential, you should talk over your decision with trusted advisors. These advisors could include a family member, faculty member, or Career Services staff member. It is better not to share salary information with other students, as they may be offered different options.

Common Mistakes

One of the biggest mistakes job seekers make is trying to negotiate before a job offer has been made, which usually results in a red flag to the employer. Once a job offer has been made, there is a greater likelihood they will consider negotiating with you rather than repeating the entire process with someone else. However, in rare cases, when it sounds like an offer has been extended during an initial interview, you can ask, "It sounds like you are offering me the position, is that correct?" If the answer is yes, you can express your enthusiasm for the offer and ask the employer to put it in writing so you can make a careful decision. Companies rarely ask for a decision on the spot, and if they do, it could be a red flag for a potential issue. However, if this is a second or third interview, and you are certain you want to accept, you can indicate your intent and let them know you will send a letter of acceptance when you receive a written offer.

Avoid...

- Accepting an offer from one employer while you are waiting for a better offer
- Telling an employer you have another offer if you do not have one
- Leaving town or becoming unavailable without the hiring manager knowing how to reach you
- Placing unrealistic deadlines on employers for extending an offer