

# Salary Negotiation Guide



ROLLINS  
SCHOOL OF  
PUBLIC  
HEALTH

OFFICE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

PHONE: (404) 727-9957

E-MAIL: [rsphcareerdev@emory.edu](mailto:rsphcareerdev@emory.edu)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sph.emory.edu/careers/current-students/index.html>

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## WHEN TO NEGOTIATE?

For most job opportunities at the early stage of your career (first ten years), you should ideally wait until the job offer is pending to discuss salary. There are two main reasons why you should wait:

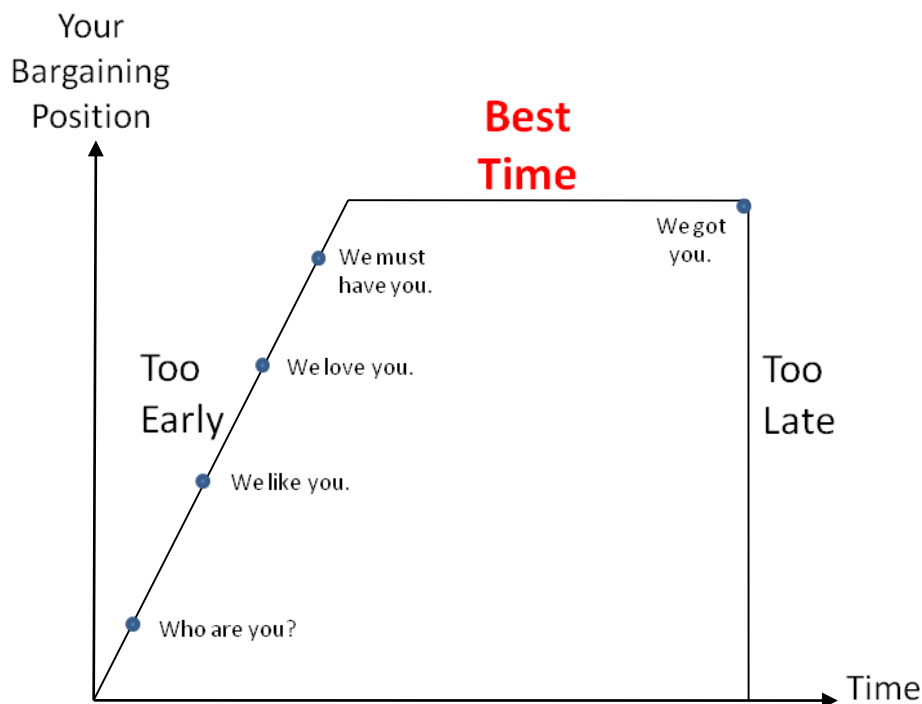
1. After the interview process is complete, the employer may believe you are worth even more than they had originally planned.
2. You avoid the risk of alienating employers with salary requirements before they have decided they must have you.

However, sometimes employers may ask what your desired salary range is during the interview process. Before interviewing, you should prepare for this question by

1. researching typical salaries for someone with your experience going into this type of job and
2. preparing a comfortable way for you to postpone answering this question until a later point if you feel the question is premature.

*Possible responses if you are asked about salary before being offered the position include:*

1. "I'd prefer to discuss salary after I learn more about the **responsibilities** of the job and we can determine if I am a **strong fit** for your organization"
2. "I would wish to be compensated in line with the skills and abilities I have to offer your organization"
3. "What range did you have in mind?" (as follow-up, if all else fails)



## HOW TO PREPARE FOR SALARY NEGOTIATION

1. Determine an appropriate salary range: *What is an appropriate salary range for people entering into the type of job you are pursuing with a similar level of experience? Understand the value you bring to the position by virtue of your applicable previous experience and the level of responsibility entailed.*

2. Determine how much money you need or want: *Similar jobs in different settings may have different salaries. For example, non-profit organizations may pay less than a large consulting company. Salaries will also differ based on location – remember that cities may have very different costs-of-living.*
3. Determine how important salary is to you in deciding whether to accept a job: *If your dream job pays less than you would like, it may still be worth doing for experience or for opportunities it could open up in the future.*
4. Become comfortable discussing salary: *You may wish to practice talking about salary with friends and the staff in Career Services. It is when individuals are uncomfortable that they often say things they may later regret!*

## HOW TO RESEARCH SALARIES

- *Online:*  
The Internet has excellent resources for exploring average salary options. Remember, salaries for one type of job title or position vary based on location and type of organization. Below is a list of websites that may be useful for exploring salary options in public health.
  - Yahoo HotJobs: Salary – <http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/salary>
  - Salary Expert – <http://www.salaryexpert.com>
  - Monster.com: Salary Center – <http://salary.monster.com>
  - Payscale – <http://www.payscale.com>
  - Jobstar - <http://jobstar.org/tools/salary/index.php>
  - NACE Salary Calculator - <http://www.jobsearchintelligence.com/NACE/salary-calculator-intro/>
- *In Person:*  
Often, faculty, mentors, friends and relatives may have insight into what types of salaries are typical of certain jobs. Also, Career Services may be able to provide you with information about the salaries of recent graduates.

## HOW WILL YOU RESPOND ONCE YOU RECEIVE THE OFFER?

- Base your negotiation on your skills/experience and research, not your student loan repayments.
- Don't box yourself in by focusing on a specific salary
- Assess what can and can't be negotiated
- State your case, then wait!

*"Based on my X and Y skills, my experience in Z, and my research on the average salary for this position in Anywheresville, I was hoping to be more in the mid-\$."*

## KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN NEGOTIATING SALARIES

- ✓ You do not have to accept a job offer immediately. Accepting a job offer is a big decision. Know when they have made their final offer, then confirm the offer and give yourself some time to think about it.
- ✓ It is best to receive your offer in writing. That way there is less room for miscommunication. If you are offered a position over the phone or in person, it is reasonable to politely ask for the offer in writing.

- ✓ Some positions have no room for salary negotiation. For example, fellowships come with a set salary or stipend for your time and they cannot be negotiated. Know when it is appropriate to try to negotiate and when it is not.
- ✓ If you really want the job – don't appear greedy! However, don't be a pushover. Before you start a job is the optimal time for salary negotiation, and will have real consequences for your salary progression over the years.
- ✓ When comparing positions, it is important to look at more than just the salary. Explore other components of your compensation and benefits, which may include insurance coverage, holiday pay and sick time, relocation assistance, bonuses, performance reviews, etc.
- ✓ In addition to exploring different positions and negotiating salaries, keep in mind that you want a job that you will enjoy. If you will be miserable, but making more money, it may not be worth it. So avoid boxing yourself in by focusing on a specific salary. If the "perfect" job comes along, you may be willing to sacrifice that \$3,000.
- ✓ Think about all the aspects of a job that are important to you. This may include tangible and intangible things such as
  - Interesting and meaningful work
  - Relationship with co-workers
  - Length of commute
  - Opportunity for advancement
  - Training and skill building
- ✓ Have a range in mind when you go into an interview, typically \$5,000-\$10,000, determined based on your research.
- ✓ Remember that employers are looking for a good fit and someone they want to work with. So be sure to have a positive attitude and focus on your enthusiasm for the position.