



### **3 Step Strategy To Smart Salary Negotiations**

In all the various areas of career management, salary negotiations undoubtedly raise the most questions from job seekers. It remains an area of mystery where candidates are rarely prepared to effectively discuss the topic of salary negotiations with employers. By following steps outlined below, you can feel much more confident in salary negotiations knowing that you have put in the work to negotiate your best salary.

#### **1. What's the Position salary range?**

It's impossible to negotiate a competitive salary without knowing the range.

**Mistake:** Only utilizing salary research sites such as *Payscale.com* and *Salary.com* to determine salary ranges. These sites are good for estimates, but ranges vary wildly depending on the position, organization and location.

**Smart:** Don't stop your research at the web.

⇒ **Start researching ranges with real people.** Resources like the Emory Alumni Directory and industry associations like the Georgia Association of Public Health are a great way to start having real conversations regarding salary ranges with experts in your field.

⇒ **Ask the employer what the salary range is at the time the offer is made if it is not volunteered during, or prior to the offer.**

#### **2. Know Your salary range?**

A critical step to successfully negotiating your salary.

**Mistake:** Having a vague idea of what you will accept. For example: "Maybe I would take around 60k"

**Smart:** We all have a range we'll accept and you must know your specific range prior to salary negotiations by determining 3 critical figures:

⇒ Minimum: The minimum salary you will accept based on your needs, and the position? *Example: 55K*

⇒ Desired: The amount you think is fair based on your experience and skills:  
*Example 65k*

⇒ Ideal: The amount you would be ecstatic to obtain based on your experience and skills: *Example 70k*

Now you have created a range for yourself from **55-70k**. Compare that range to the research you have performed in step one to make sure you are not under valuing or over valuing your market value.

**Goal:** Your goal is to successfully negotiate an amount in your “desired to ideal” salary range of 65-70k.

**3. When the offer is made** - A typical Scenario and how to respond.

**Mistake:** *Candidate:* “62,000 is a little lower than I had hoped, is it possible that we could go just a little higher?” This is vague and you have given the employer no counter offer range to consider.

**Smart:**

In step 2, you determined your “minimum to ideal” range is 55-70k. You have received an offer of 62k, and your “desired to ideal” range is 65k-70k.

*Candidate:* “Thank you for the offer of 62,000. I am excited to be selected as your top candidate for this position. I understand from our prior discussions the range for this opportunity is in the 60’s. Based on my skills, experience and advanced degree I bring to this opportunity, the salary I am requesting is in high 60’s.”

**Next:** Be quite and wait for the employer to respond! Many times the employer will not immediately counter your offer, stating they will get back to you. Say thank you and ask when you can expect to hear back from them (important in case you have other upcoming or pending offers.) Continue to convey that you are excited about the position and the opportunity to work for the organization.

**Salary Negotiations Outcome:** In this particular negotiation, it would be typical for the employer to come back with a split of the 62k and your request for the high 60’s, to extend an offer of around 65-67k.

*Finally,* don’t forget to discuss as part of your negotiations additional benefits that affect your total compensation package such as medical coverage, continuing education and retirement plans for example.

***Congratulations! You have successfully negotiated your “desired to ideal range.”***

## **ADDITIONAL KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN NEGOTIATING SALARIES**

### **Response when asked what salary you are looking for as a candidate?**

- ✓ It's always best to never discuss salary until AFTER an offer has been made by the employer. However, many interviewers will ask you your desired salary in order to eliminate you either in a phone screening or 1st round interview. An example response would be: *"I'm open regarding salary, what's most important to me is that I'm with an organization that I'm passionate about utilizing my skills and experience to make a strong impact developing my leadership abilities."*

### **Always Remain Professional**

- ✓ Stay positive and never allow yourself to get flustered or upset during salary negotiations. You must remain professional at all times or else you risk losing the position.

### **Time Frame For Accepting An Offer**

- ✓ You do not have to accept a job offer immediately – ask about a time frame for providing an answer, accepting a job offer is a big decision. It's perfectly appropriate to state you would like some time to consider all aspects of the offer, just make sure you know the time frame.

### **Verbal or In Writing?**

- ✓ 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.

### **Don't Appear Greedy**

- ✓ Don't come across as if the salary is the only important aspect of the job. However, don't be a pushover either because you want to earn a salary you feel is appropriate for your level of skills, experience and education.

### **Evaluate More than just salary**

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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
  - Location & Length of commute
  - Opportunity for advancement
  - Training and skill building