

# NEGOTIATING SALARY

During the hiring process, it is not uncommon for interviewers to ask you about your preferred salary or total compensation. Based on your qualifications, you might find you would like to earn more than the company is offering. This tip sheet will help you figure out how to find the average salary for the position you are applying for, as well as tips on how to talk about salary. We're here to make sure the question, "What is your preferred salary?" isn't a scary one!



## To start, use these websites to gauge what the average salary is in your industry/line of work:

- **Salary.com:** Search using a specific job title or a keyword and then your location. Job descriptions and titles will be provided along with average salary ranges and comparison features.
- **Payscale.com:** Search a multitude of areas including jobs, salary for specific degrees, companies, and even look based on city and state. Salary will be shown both hourly and annually.
- **Indeed.com:** Search by job title and location for an average salary, companies looking for the job title nearby, and highest paying cities for the job you searched.
- **LinkedIn:** Consider reaching out to current employees of the company through LinkedIn. This is as simple as saying, "Hi, X. I hope this message finds you well. I am exploring [position] roles with [company]. I see that you work there and was wondering if you could tell me about the company's compensation structure?"

## What to do when negotiating salary:

- **Explain why:** Do not just state your desired salary, help the employer see why that salary is justifiable. Do not just say you are valuable, as that can come across as arrogance. Rather, market your specific skills that could be beneficial to the position, or any additional certifications or schooling.
- **Make it clear they can get you:** If an employer does not feel that you are going to decline the offer front the beginning, they are less likely to be open to negotiation. If you intend to negotiate, make it clear that you are serious about working for the company. If you mention you have multiple options, tell the employer why or what conditions would make you forget those options.
- **Understand salary constraints:** Even if you are the perfect candidate, companies might not be able to give you the salary you are looking for. Some companies have strong restraints, such as hiring caps, when it comes to salary. Part of the negotiation process is finding out what is flexible and what is not. If you can't negotiate salary, are they willing to be flexible with your start date, vacation, or signing bonus?
- **Keep things in perspective:** Your satisfaction should not be from "winning" a negotiation, but rather if you are going for the *right* job. Doing research into your career trajectory, the day-to-day life within the company, and leadership can be widely more important than aspects of an offer. Make sure you are going through a thoughtful job hunt ensuring that you will end up somewhere that leaves you loving your job.
- **Pick the top of the range:** When exploring salaries, you will most likely find a range for your desired position. Instead of asking for something in the middle, you should ask for a salary towards the top. It is common for employers to negotiate down, so this ensures you have some wiggle room to end with a salary you are still pleased with.