

How To Negotiate Salary Without Offending



Posted by [Donna Fuscaldo](#) • September 19th, 2012

Negotiating a starting [salary](#) can be a slippery slope. Make a mistake and you can leave more than money on the table. No employer wants to be bullied into paying extra, but on the same token, potential employees don't want to undercut themselves when it comes to accepting a [salary offer](#). While it's easy to offend somebody during the negotiation process, there are ways to do it effectively and successfully, without upsetting either side. Consider these tips:

Is There Room for Negotiation

According to career experts, the first step is to see if there is really any reason to negotiate at all.

"Before you walk in the door you have to find out what is the going rate for your position and experience," says Patricia Sweeney, human resource manager at Old Colony Hospice and Palliative Care. "If you are going into a small non-profit hoping to make \$80,000 a year, chances are that's not going to happen. You need to know the industry you are going into."

[Joel Garfinkle](#), author of *Get Paid What You're Worth*, says you shouldn't go in expecting to get double what you are offered. "Demanding more money and waiving another offer in their face typically doesn't work," he says.

Not only [research the going rate for your position](#) and experience, but also do your homework on the company you are interviewing for. Are they profitable, are they growing, do they have high turnover or have a reputation for under paying employees, are all things you want to know ahead of time.

Figure Out What You Want Ahead Of Time

Setting a range for what you are willing to take and what will make you walk away is also important to negotiating successfully. According to [Jack Chapman](#), a career coach and author of *Negotiating Your Salary, How to Make \$1000 a Minute*, you should have an ideal number, a satisfactory number and a no-go number set in your mind. The ideal number should be how much you would want to make in the perfect situation. It should pass the laugh test but it shouldn't be too low either. "Ask yourself what would be ideal more than straight cash," says Chapman. "Maybe it's some equity in the company, a bonus or no travel when there's usually 25% travel."

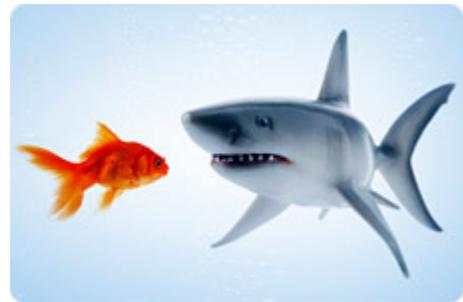
The satisfactory number is the one that's based more on research and what you can bring to the company. Pursue help wanted ads and Internet sites to find out what people in your field are getting paid. Garfinkle says many companies list a salary range in job postings to make candidates aware of what to expect.

The no-go number is the number that you will turn down and the amount that you are willing to walk away over. If you have your numbers in your head before the interview, not only will you negotiate from a position of strength, but you also won't be tempted to take a lowball offer, says Chapman.

Keep Your Arrogance in Check

Once you are in talks with the company, a way to see how their leaning toward negotiations is to ask them why they are hiring you, says [Jim Camp](#) founder of the Camp Negotiation Institute. "You want to see what they see in you," he says. If the employer says you're not the most qualified, but we think you will learn on the job, then it's probably not smart to try to negotiate the highest salary for that position. But if they say you are the most qualified for the job, then you know you're worth more to the company than the other candidates.

Camp says to not only focus on the salary when it comes to negotiating. Take into account the value of stock options, the retirement program, medical benefits and vacation time. "When we negotiate we want to negotiate all the possible ingredients of the package. We don't want to miss one," he says.



Even if you are a world renowned heart surgeon or a crack software programmer, you have to maintain a humble attitude during the negotiations. If you are too cocky, no matter how great you think you are, it could backfire. Same goes for only caring about money. That sends the message that you are only as loyal as the highest bidder. "You may be the best candidate for the job, but rarely will you be the only candidate for a job in today's market," says Garfinkle. "Arrogance can often lead to the employer selecting the next best candidate."



Donna Fuscaldo is a freelance journalist hailing out of Long Island, New York. Donna writes for numerous online publications including FoxBusiness.com, Bankrate.com, AARP.com, Insurance.com and Houselogic.com. As a personal finance reporter for years, Donna provides invaluable advice on everything from saving money to landing that dream job. She also writes a weekly column for FoxBusiness.com focused on technology for small businesses. Previously, Donna was an equities reporter for Dow Jones Newswires and a special contributor to the Wall Street Journal. Through the

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