

FLASHPOINT CHICAGO

A CAMPUS OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE HOLLYWOOD

NEGOTIATION MADE EASY: A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR SALARY NEGOTIATION

RULES FOR NEGOTIATING

Be prepared. Know what you are worth.

Be cool. Exhibit patience and confidence in discussions.

Be present. Email negotiations can take 15x longer than face-to-face negotiations.

Be realistic. Nobody is paid nearly what they think they deserve.

Salary negotiations can be awkward, and it's normal to feel uncomfortable having these types of conversations, especially if you're new to the workforce. The following tips will help you overcome those fears and successfully negotiate your starting salary:

DO YOUR RESEARCH:

Before going into the negotiation, gather as much information as possible about what the average pay is for someone in your profession and at your experience level in your area. Several websites provide average salary information for a wide range of occupations. The following sites can help you get a picture of what some workers earn:

- [Payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com) – get an in-depth salary report
- [BLS.gov/ooh/](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/) – get industry standards
- [Onetonline.org](https://www.onetonline.org) – get local and national industry standards
- [glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com) – hear from actual employees

KNOW YOUR NEGOTIATION RANGE:

There are many ways to determine what your negotiation range can cover, but let's keep it simple.

- **How much do you need to make in order to survive?**

Add up all of your bills, expenses, etc. and determine the amount of money you need to sustain your current lifestyle.

- **Identify the salary potential.** Using the sites above, discover the low, median and high end of similar jobs and their potential value in the current job market (25%, 50% and 75% percentiles).

- **Decide your ideal starting salary.** Once you've identified your minimum salary, calculate your range by 10%, 15% and 20% increments and see how they are relative to the industry standards.

- **Using your range.** Being able to walk in to negotiations with several figures that are acceptable to you will help you and the employer feel like you both win.

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PROVE YOUR WORTH:

Just as having a salary range is a necessary part of negotiating, so is the proof that you are worth that kind of expense for the company. Be prepared to give examples of how your skills, previous experience and creativity meet the company's goals in making more money or reducing costs. When you can explain how valuable you'll be, the hiring manager can feel more justified in increasing your salary or benefits package.

HAVE OPTIONS:

If you get rejected in your request for a higher starting salary, you may think that's the only card you can play. Oftentimes, however, employers are willing to consider [alternative benefits](#). Other areas you should consider when evaluating an employer and worth asking about in terms of flexibility if salary is non-negotiable:

- Health benefits
- PTO/vacation packages
- Flexible work schedules/work-from-home options
- Training and development
- Educational reimbursement
- Advancement opportunities
- Incremental performance reviews
- Travel