

Salary negotiation can be as nerve-racking as the initial interview.

Be Prepared...

- **KNOW WHAT YOU'RE WORTH.**
Salaries depend mainly on the type of work and the geographic area where the position is located. The skills required for the job and the overall cost of living in the region dictate what entry-level employees are paid. Most companies share salary data, and therefore will have detailed information on the distribution of salaries across industries and locales. Generally, employers will know exactly what you're worth. In negotiation, it pays to have an idea as well.
- In addition, have prepared a list of your skills that make you deserving of a higher salary or more benefits. Employers will negotiate within a range, but will rarely exceed that range unless you are an exceptional candidate. Be prepared to prove to a potential-employer that you may be worth a slightly higher salary. For example, if you are a marketing manager with experience in technical writing, you could ask for slightly more money because most managers would pass off any writing to someone else.
- **KNOW YOUR BUDGET AND WHAT YOU NEED.**
Before you begin salary negotiations, decide what salary you WANT to earn, what you NEED to live on, and what you will be willing to SETTLE for. The cost of living in the geographic area will be a factor as it is more expensive to obtain comparable housing, parking, insurance, and other necessities in places like New York City than it would be in Chicago or Milwaukee. These are personal decisions that nobody can make for you and for which there is no real guideline.

Negotiation DON'Ts

- Don't be the first to mention salary.
- Don't lie about your salary history.
- Never tell an employer your bottom line.

Other Resources:

- **Quintessential Careers...http://www.quintcareers.com/salary_negotiation.html**
Provides a collection of salary information and negotiation resources, including "Salary Negotiation Do's and Don'ts," a "Job Offer Quiz," and a salary negotiation tutorial.
- **Salary.Com...<http://www.salary.com>**
A free resource with information on salaries and careers in dozens of fields.
- **JobStar... <http://jobstar.org/tools/salary/negostrt.cfm>**
A collection of links that offer tips and advice on salary negotiation.
- **The NACE salary calculator... http://www.nacweb.org/salary_calculator/**
A free salary calculator for job seekers from the National Association of Colleges and Employers.