

Quick Guide: Salary Negotiations

Contrary to what many say, not everything is negotiable. Sometimes employers have more flexibility than they are willing to admit, but this can vary with the economic times, the salary structure and other factors.

No matter what stage you are at in your career, this topic can be uncomfortable. With the right knowledge, you can increase your chances of successfully negotiating a fair remuneration package.

What kind of salary to expect

This is usually the first question that comes up when thinking about a job offer. How do you know that what you are being offered is fair? The best way to go into any conversation with an organisation is to be prepared – do your research on salaries. Helpful resources on what kinds of salaries to expect are:

- ➔ <http://www.intermediair.nl> (the Netherlands)
- ➔ <http://www.loonwijzer.nl> (the Netherlands)
- ➔ <http://www.glassdoor.com> (international)
- ➔ <http://www.salaryexpert.com> (international)

Tips

- ➔ Make sure they want you
- ➔ Research the salary
- ➔ Research how the company is doing
- ➔ Let them come with the first salary offer
- ➔ Give a range, not an amount
- ➔ Take time to think over the offer
- ➔ Focus on why you are worth the money

Your options

Once you know what you can expect, what are your options? The safest option is to accept whichever offer is given. It keeps you from leaving empty handed, especially if you find yourself discussing salary before you have a secure offer. You can also decide to negotiate. Remember you can negotiate both salary and benefits (i.e. starting date, vacation days, training programmes, a phone or a car).

How to negotiate

- ➔ **Prepare:** determine what exactly you want, what the average salary range is for the position and company in that particular country; if possible, determine beforehand what kind of person you will be negotiating with.
- ➔ **Create value:** have clear and good arguments that describe why you are worth the amount of money instead of why you need it.
- ➔ **Be empathic:** understand that the person you are negotiating with might not have the money to give you – suggest alternative ways of compensation such as a company phone, a company car or more vacation time.
- ➔ **Communicate well:** make sure that what you want is clear and remember non-verbal communication is paramount – be confident, not arrogant.

Caution:

Pushing too hard might leave you empty handed.

Who are you negotiating with

Remember that negotiations are not only about you getting as much as possible. In some capacity you will need to work with the people who you are negotiating. If you are negotiating with your boss, you might need to keep the working relationship in mind more than if you are negotiating with an HR representative. Depending on your circumstance you may also find that you are more successful in negotiating when you negotiate with your supervisor who is more familiar with what you have to offer.

When to negotiate

Employers may ask you what your salary expectations are before you are offered a job. If you would like to negotiate your salary, remember that you will have more power in such negotiations after you are sure you have the job. You can try to avoid these discussions with strategies such as:

- ➔ “What is the standard salary for an entry level position similar to this one?”

If they push further, give a range – that way you can leave negotiations open in the future