

# Evaluating Job Offers

## THE POSITION

- Day to day tasks: routine or project oriented?
- Degree of independence
- Opportunity to learn new skills
- Opportunity to apply academic training
- Exposure to outstanding colleagues
- Hours: both stated and expected?
- Criteria used to evaluate you
- Personalities of supervisors/colleagues
- Opportunity for travel
- Pressure and pace of work
- Social significance of position
- Fit of position with long term goals
- Transferability of skills
- Obtain a written job description
- Be prepared with questions regarding day-to-day responsibilities
- Speak with potential co-workers in the department
- Ask to see the office, desk or cubicle assigned to the position
- Ask how individuals in the department and/or company communicate with each other

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

- Salary-bonuses included? When is annual review?
- Medical/dental/vision benefits
- Retirement plan
- Company holidays/sick leave
- Life insurance
- Stock options
- Relocation expenses
- Educational benefits

## THE ORGANIZATION

- Technologically innovative
- High investment in R&D
- Quality of products and services
- Management style/quality
- Opportunity for advancement
- Reputation and image of company/profitability/stability
- Encouragement of professional growth
- Importance of your division/team to the company as a whole
- Corporate culture
- Integrity/ethics/company values
- Future of company/products
- Find out about opportunities for career growth
- Does the company encourage new ideas?
- Pay attention to several factors during your on-site interview.
  - Demeanor of people: friendliness, professionalism, attitude
  - Work environment: atmosphere, pace
- Is there recognition for special achievement?
- Check into training and professional development opportunities
- Be aware of how you are treated during the second interview
- Ask for a copy of the company newsletter

## LIFESTYLE

- Proximity to graduate schools
- Cost of living
- Proximity to family and friends
- Commuting distance/costs/traffic
- Recreational/cultural opportunities
- Employment opportunities for spouse/partner
- Long-term professional and personal prospects for self/spouse/partner
- Weather

## STABILITY / GROWTH

- Growth history
- Dependence on the business cycle/trends
- Dependence on government policies/programs
- Ask for a copy of the company annual report
- Check trade journals and other publications
- Is the company public or private?
- Is the company driven by research and development or is it cost driven?

# Negotiating Salary

The art of negotiating is the process of pursuing a goal in a dialogue with another person or persons. Its resolution is one in which all involved should feel satisfied. Negotiating should not be an adversarial process--relax and get organized! Here are some additional tips for success.

- Never accept a job offer on the spot
- Come to the table with confidence
- Always start the process with positive comments regarding the company and the position
- Know what you can deliver in tangible terms
- Understand your strengths and why you are unique
- Practice the negotiation session
- Develop an understanding of the best time in the process to negotiate
- Avoid commitment words: always, must have, deal breaker, never, won't consider
- Be sure both sides win
- Know when to stop the process
- Consider negotiating non-salary aspects of an offer: benefits, relocation expenses, bonuses, start date, etc.
- Gain an understanding of the company evaluation process and future increases
- During the process, hear what is being "communicated" not just what is being said. Be aware of body language and other subtle signals.
- Be sensitive to the goals, issues and risks of the individual with whom you are negotiating
- Your negotiating goals, rationales and alternatives should be presented in business terms-addressing the position under discussion, not your lifestyle goals.
- BE REALISTIC

In responding to a company's job offer, you should consider:

- The current demand in the job market for your expertise
- The urgency of the company's need to fill the position
- The degree to which you feel you have sold the employer on your value
- The size and financial strength of the organization
- The company's internal flexibility to adjust salary levels

## NON-SALARY METHODS OF COMPENSATION

- Flex time
- Laptop/personal computer
- Company car
- Yearly/quarterly bonus
- Profit sharing
- Public transportation reimbursement
- Childcare expenses
- Vacation time
- Car phone
- Club/association membership
- Corporate recreation facilities
- Stock options/equity
- Commuting expenses/parking
- Signing bonus
- Moving/relocation costs

## WEBSITES FOR EVALUATING JOB OFFERS/NEGOTIATING SALARY

[salary.com](http://salary.com), [salaryexpert.com](http://salaryexpert.com) and [quintcareers.com](http://quintcareers.com)  
Salary ranges by job title and geographic location

[jobstar.org](http://jobstar.org)

Salary surveys, negotiating tips, job ads, job hotlines and job fairs

[homefair.com](http://homefair.com)

Cost of living comparisons and salary calculator

