

# Negotiating Your Salary

Almost everyone feels like they are in a pressure cooker when it comes to any type of bargaining, and salary negotiation is no exception. But it doesn't have to be that way. A little knowledge can turn the heat down and give you confidence in this business discussion.

This guide is about sharpening your negotiating skills with some insider tips on how employers think about money and how you can ask for what you want.

## Benefits of Salary Negotiations

Salary negotiation can be very uncomfortable. If you have been out of work for quite a while, the idea of being back in a job is so attractive you may not negotiate your salary for fear you will not be hired. You may accept any salary just to get back to work. Continue reading to learn more about preparing yourself for this process.

## Things to Consider When Negotiating Your Salary

### When to Talk Salary

One approach is to avoid salary talk until after you have a job offer. The other way is to find out up front what the salary range is so you don't spend your time on something you won't accept. Either way can work for you. You have to figure out which style is good for you and best in each situation. Be sure you are comfortable with the method you choose.

### Preparing for Negotiations

The "perfect job" you found isn't really perfect unless it pays enough to support your lifestyle or at least pays for the essentials. Before you start looking for a job, you should know how much money you need to pay the bills and to live comfortably.

### Interviewing with a Small Company

In small companies and nonprofit businesses, salaries are not usually fixed. In fact, many managers of small organizations say they have a hard time deciding on a fair wage. They want to offer reasonable pay in order to attract good workers, but they do not want to over inflate overhead expenses.

Knowing the small business manager's concerns can give you an opening in your negotiations. Provide the employer with wage details for your job that will educate him and support your salary request. (See wage information on reverse side.)

### Be Flexible: Keep Your Options Open

Many times the interviewer will mention salary as if it is set and not changeable. Do not agree or disagree. Simply state, "This figure fits into my range." Using this open-ended statement will allow you to continue the interview with all your salary options open.

## Have Questions?

Georgia Department of Labor Career Centers are available to assist you with job leads and free access to Internet, copier, phone, and fax.

Locate an office near you at [www.gadol.gov](http://www.gadol.gov).

*Georgia*  
**DOL**  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
Mark Butler, Commissioner

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## Research Salary Information

Because the salary climate is constantly changing, you need to know where to find the latest data.

Here's a list of the top salary resources:

- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Securities and Exchange Commission
- JobStar ([www.jobstar.org](http://www.jobstar.org))
- [www.salarynegotiations.com](http://www.salarynegotiations.com)
- The American Almanac of Jobs and Salaries
- Professional trade journals and business magazines
- Newspaper and online job listings
- A career coach or GDOL staff

Use the Internet and your local library to learn more about these salary surveys and to discover what salary is typical for the type of work you are seeking in your part of the country. The Internet allows you to find information easily and quickly.

For additional help be sure to check the Georgia Department of Labor's website at [www.gadol.gov](http://www.gadol.gov). Your local Georgia Department of Labor Career Center will also have the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the Georgia Wage Survey, and America's Top 300 Jobs. These books are an important source of job information and contain starting and average pay rates of many jobs.

## Be Prepared

Practice your negotiation skills with family and friends before your interview. Go into your interview with your research done and your negotiation skills polished.

Remember that salary negotiation is not about win/lose. It is a two-way process where you and the employer are each trying to get what you need at the best price. When that occurs, it is a win-win.

Being prepared to negotiate your salary will help you to earn the best possible income for you and your family.

## Timing Is Important

Try your best to avoid mentioning salary until you receive a firm job offer. This will give you more time to gather information about the job and sell your skills to the employer.

Postponing salary negotiation has several advantages. Here are several to consider. You:

- May get a better salary offer than you expected.
- May avoid asking for too low a figure or end the negotiation by asking for too much.
- May be able to discover the starting point of the negotiation process.

## A Word of Advice About Salary Negotiations Over the Phone

Experts say negotiating over the telephone puts you at a disadvantage. You cannot see the facial expressions of the interviewer, so you are unable to learn valuable information that could affect the discussion. If possible, wait until you have a firm job offer, then arrange for an in-person interview to discuss salary rather than risk losing a great opportunity over the phone.

## Negotiating Your Salary Websites

[www.quintcareers.com](http://www.quintcareers.com)

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

[www.employmentspot.com](http://www.employmentspot.com)



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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program | Auxiliary Aids & Services are Available Upon Request to Individuals with Disabilities