Job Offers and Salary Negotiations:

Before beginning the interview process with an organization, you should plan your salary discussion by completing a five-step desired salary assessment for determining your ideal salary range.

**STEP 1:** Review all current bills, anticipated expenses, etc. to determine the minimum requirements for meeting your needs.

**STEP 2:** Clarify your value in the current employment market and with the specific employer.
- Investigate how the prospective employer compares to competitors (i.e., higher salaries or lower salaries).

**STEP 3:** Determine a realistic "dream" figure, a salary that would make joyous celebration inevitable but that would not price you out of a job in your field.

**STEP 4:** Using all the information you gather to determine a range of $2,000-$5,000 that would be a fair offer considering your experience level, education level and data on fair salaries. Example: Lab Tech in OKC - $32,000-$36,000 a year

**STEP 5:** Evaluate the current economy and your level of experience to determine if you have received a competitive offer. It may not be necessary to negotiate your offer if it’s a competitive offer.

**When to Begin Negotiations**

Although you should determine your desired salary range prior to an initial interview with an employer, you should avoid instigating a discussion of compensation during that initial employment interview. If an employer broaches the subject of salary in your initial interview, do not evade the discussion. You may wish to postpone the discussion temporarily to gather more information from the interview. This mission can be accomplished by telling the interviewer that you would find it easier to discuss money after you have clarified a few more details about the position and the organization. You should then request permission to ask a few questions. If the interviewer insists on discussing salary during the first interview, then the
topic should be addressed. Otherwise, the ideal time to begin salary negotiations is when the 
job offer has clearly been extended. During the interview process, you are at a disadvantage 
with regards to a salary discussion because you are trying to sell yourself to the employer. 
After the offer has been extended, the employer has already reached the decision that you are 
the ideal candidate. Also by this point, you should know what your ideal compensation 
package encompasses. You now have the advantage, begin negotiating.

The Negotiation Process

The employer should present the first salary figure. Employers may ask of you initially, "What 
are your salary expectations?" Employers are seeking a dollar figure. However, you can turn 
the question back to the employer by summarizing the responsibilities and expectations of the 
position and by following the summary with "What has the organization budgeted for a position 
of this nature?" or "What figure or range did you have in mind for someone with my 
qualifications for fulfilling this type of position?"

When the focus of the conversation returns to you with another request for a dollar figure, you 
should review your key qualifications to the employer, emphasizing skills and abilities and then 
disclose the number you previously determined to be a fair range for the position.

Reacting to the Initial Offer

FAIR OFFER REACTION: If you believe the employer's offer for compensation is a fair offer, 
you may want to try one more time to increase the value of the proposition. This attempt may 
be initiated by stating to the employer that you are very close to an agreement. The 
appropriate next step in this reaction is to disclose a specific number that is slightly above the 
employer's offer. This disclosure should be followed by an effort to reconcile your desired 
range with the offer by asking, "How much liberty to negotiate do we still have?" Using this 
strategy may result in a slight increase in your offer or in the same offer.

UNDESIRABLE OFFER REACTION 2: If the employer's offer is less than you believe is 
equitable, your strategy should be to continue negotiations by requesting incentives, a salary 
increase based on your value or salary research, or for added options. A one-time relocation 
bonus or salary bonus, additional 401 K options, vacation days or other changes in the 
benefits package may be requested. The salary is just one area you can negotiate and you 
may consider other options if salary is firm. You should stress your potential assets to the 
employer and assure the employer of your sincere interest in the position with the one barrier 
to acceptance being a suitable salary package.

Benefits as a Part of Overall Compensation

In evaluating the value of the overall compensation package, the value of benefits should not 
be overlooked. The following list mentions benefits common to salary offers. Keep in mind 
that you may be able to attain some of the one-time benefits by negotiating them into a salary 
offer that you initially judged as inequitable.

- Signing and/or year-end bonuses
- Guaranteed promotions and raises within an established time
- Relocation assistance
- 401K and other investment matching programs
− "Cafeteria" insurance plans (you select the insurance benefits you want)
− Profit sharing
− Stock options
− Pension plans
− Company car or car allowance
− Car insurance (or insurance allowance)
− Car maintenance and gas (or an allowance for each)
− Compensation time for unpaid overtime
− Country club or health club membership
− Medical, dental and/or vision insurance (note deductibles and amount of premium employer pays)
− Job discontinuation policy
− Expense account
− Financial planning and tax assistance
− Life insurance
− Short-term or long-term disability plans
− Paid sick leave
− Paid vacation
− Tuition assistance
− Professional development programs
− Child care
− Work scheduling flexibility
− Home-based work opportunities

Making the Final Decision

When an employer extends a final offer of a compensation package, you should never accept the offer immediately. The appropriate action is to express your excitement at the prospect of becoming a part of the company and to ask for a few days to give the offer your final considerations. During that few days, seek the opinions of mentors and advisors, and then compare that advice with your own instincts and observations. The traditional list of pros and cons can be a valuable tool during your final evaluation.

Upon making your final decision, you should contact the organization and verbally accept or reject the position. If you accept the position, a letter of formal acceptance detailing the specific position, salary, and benefits you are accepting should be promptly forwarded to the company. If you decide to reject the offer, sending a letter of appreciation may maintain the lines of communication with the organization in case you wish to pursue future opportunities with the organization.
Items to Consider and/or Negotiate

Rank the following statements in order by what is most important to you for 1 equaling the most important option and the highest number equaling the least important option.

**COMPENSATION**
- Base Salary
- Bonus
- Incentive Bonus
- Money in lieu of benefits
- Overtime pay
- Hourly wages

**BENEFITS**
- Insurance Programs
  - Medical
  - Dental
  - Vision
  - Life
  - Long-Term Disability
  - Retirement
  - Personal Days
  - Vacation
  - Holidays
  - Sick Days

**FINANCIAL PROGRAMS**
- Stock Options
- Company Paid Pension
- Immediate Vesting of Pension
- Matching Investment/Profit Sharing
- Long-Term Disability Thrift Plan

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Leadership/Management Development
- Education/Training Expenses
- Professional Association Membership
- Subscriptions to professional publications

**PERKS**
- Expense Account
- Company Car
- Commuting Allowance
- Parking Reimbursement
- Free Lunches

**RELOCATION COSTS**
- House Hunting Trips
- Apartment/House Location Assistance
- Moving Costs (Direct or Percentage)
- Travel Costs
- Temporary Housing
- Getting Settled Expenses
- Higher Cost of Living Subsidy
- Unusual Expenses (ex: Moving a boat, horse or overseas relocation)
- Realty Fees, Legal, Closing Costs
- Higher Mortgage Cost Allowance
- Bridge Loan
- Low-interest Loan

**EMPLOYEE SERVICES**
- Employee Assistance Program
- Annual Physical Exam
- Legal, Tax, Financial Assistance
- Loans
- Discount on Purchases
- Computer Equipment

**STATUS & LIFE STYLE PERKS**
- Club Memberships
- Country Club
- Health Club
- Airline VIP
- Frequent Flyer
- Use of Company Apartment
- Premium Hotel Accommodations
- Executive Dining Room
- Spouse’s Travel Expenses
- Tickets to Sporting Events, etc.
- Sabbatical leave
- Military Leave
- Maternity Leave (paid)
- Larger, Better Office
- Private Secretary
- Reserved Parking
Comparing Job Offers

Use the table below to record the details about each job offer in columns A, B and C. In the last column marked “My Preference,” write the letter of the job offer you find most appealing for each criteria. At the bottom of the page total the number of times you choose each offer in the “My Preference” column to find the offer that you found the most appealing by criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Criteria</th>
<th>Offer A</th>
<th>Offer B</th>
<th>Offer C</th>
<th>My Preference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary offered</td>
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<td>Location City/State</td>
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Total A: ___________  Total B: ___________  Total C: ___________