

Wentworth

Co-ops & Careers

How to Talk About Pay

Congratulations on the job offer! This is an opportunity to understand the offer, prioritize, and learn to advocate for yourself, which often means negotiating.

Consider the following...

The Job

- Does the job fit with your career goals? Will it help you reach the next step?
- Does it match your skills, interests, and abilities? Will it challenge you?
- Does it require travel? Relocation?
- Will you work independently? On a team?

Benefits (long-term, full-time jobs)

- Explore the organization's health insurance plan (don't forget about vision and dental).
- Consider the benefits such as vacation and sick day policies, 401K or pension contributions, and stock options.
- Is the position exempt or non-exempt. salary or hourly? If hourly, will you be eligible for overtime (1.5x pay each hour over the standard full time hours per week)?
- Contact the Human Resources department with any questions or concerns regarding the benefits package.

Company Culture

- Do the company's values match your own?
- What is the culture or the workspace environment like?
- Is there a lot of employee turnover? Is there opportunity for upward mobility?
- Are there opportunities for professional development? Community involvement? Advising? Mentorship?

Your Supervisor

- Do you understand their management style? Is the management style comfortable for you?
- Will you be able to learn from them?
- Do they seem invested in your professional development?

Pay

- Do some research to find out the pay range for the job/industry you are considering.
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics - Occupational Outlook Handbook - <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>
 - Glassdoor - [Glassdoor.com/salaries](https://www.glassdoor.com/salaries)
 - Salary Wizard - [Salary.com](https://www.salary.com)
 - Wentworth Career Outcomes <https://coopsandcareers.wit.edu/outcomes/>
 - Levels.fyi for SWE salaries: <https://www.levels.fyi/>
- Will you be able to live on the pay rate or salary that you are being offered?
- Consider cost of living (rent, bills, food), savings, student loan repayment, entertainment, and transportation.
- Will you get a signing bonus? Does the salary include commission or incentives? (Could be negotiated!)

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Now to Negotiate!

The biggest factor in determining whether you get a desirable pay rate is that you **ask**.

- Determine a target pay range before you interview with the organization. This range is based on your past salaries, experience, abilities, the market, the geographic location, and organization (as discussed above).
- When someone asks, you can give a number on the high end of your range, allowing room for negotiation.
- Identify a number that is the lowest you would accept, but do not tell the recruiter/interviewer/HR rep just yet.
- Negotiating is done over the phone. This way you can allow for pauses and silences. Plus, it is widely considered the most polished and respectful way to negotiate.
- After receiving an offer, thank the employer and ask for a few days or a week to consider the offer. Then call back: "Thanks again for the offer. I'm really excited to work here, and I know that I will bring a lot of value. Is there room for negotiation? ... (if so) ... I appreciate the offer at \$XX,XXX but was really expecting to be in the \$XX,XXX range based on my experience, drive and performance. Can we look at a salary of \$XX,XXX for this position?"
- The employer might counter-offer or stay firm with the initial offer. If it is a co-op or an entry-level position, accept their answer. If it is a more senior position, you can consider trying one more time: "I understand where you're coming from, and I just want to reiterate my enthusiasm for the position and working with you and the team. I think my skills are perfectly suited for this position and are worth \$XX,XXX." (Pause, allow silence)
- Further negotiating may be required. In any case, you thank them and decide whether you need more time to think, accept, or decline the offer.
- As always...PRACTICE before you call!

Remember, in order to earn competitive and desired pay, **ONE MUST ASK!**

However, it is important to do your research and understand what a competitive pay rate or salary would be for the position. If the employer makes an offer at the high end of your target range or above it, there might not be a justification for negotiation. Do not negotiate just for the sake of negotiation, as it might make a bad impression on people. If you don't have a justifiable reason to negotiate now, instead think of opportunities to negotiate later in your career when it may matter more.

Advocate for Yourself

No one else will advocate for you like you will! If an employer cannot meet your desired pay rate, there might be other items they are willing to negotiate. Consider the following when appropriate:

- Will there be opportunity to re-evaluate in 6 months?
- Are professional development memberships or participation in conferences funded?
- Is there opportunity for relocation if necessary?
- Is the vacation package negotiable?
- Can the company offer stock options?

For more information on negotiation, consult the following:

- Your dedicated Co-op & Career Advisor, available by appointment
- Deepak Malhotra, Harvard Business School Professor
 - "How to Negotiate Your Job Offer" - https://youtu.be/km2Hd_xgo9Q
 - "15 Rules for Negotiating a Job Offer" - <https://hbr.org/2014/04/15-rules-for-negotiating-a-job-offer>
- AAUW Online Training for Negotiation: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/salary/>