

guide to

EVALUATING JOB OFFERS



EVALUATING THE OFFER

Once an employer extends a job offer, you should first and foremost express your excitement and gratitude for being chosen. Then consider the following:

JOB SPECIFICS

Response time. Find out when you need to respond to their offer. It is very appropriate for most employers to give you time (at least a day or two) to decide and get back to them.



The position. Make sure that you are familiar with the position you are being offered, including who would be your supervisor, required training, job tasks, environment, advancement opportunities, benefits, and location. Ask for all the specifics in writing if you can.

Starting date. Though the company may want you to begin working right away, be sure that you have enough time to adjust from graduation and moving.

MONEY

Salary. Research salary ranges for your level of experience and degree in your chosen field.



General Info: <http://www.salary.com>

Salary by Employer: <http://www.glassdoor.com>

Outcomes from Mizzou grads: <https://undergraduatestudies.missouri.edu/career-outcomes/>

Search by Job/Industry/Location: https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Country=United_States/Salary

Compare Cost of Living: <https://www.nerdwallet.com/cost-of-living-calculator>

BENEFITS

Benefits packages vary widely by employer and industry. You can attempt to negotiate, although not all benefits will be negotiable. Here are some of the top benefit options among many:



Health Insurance

Include medical, dental, or vision plans. The most common plans are a Preferred Provider Option or Health Maintenance Organization, both of which have costs and benefits.

Paid Time Off

May include vacation, sick leave, maternity/paternity leave, flex time, or overtime. Some employers offer overtime or bonus pay, or allow you flexibility in your schedule or the ability to work from home.

Retirement Plans

Includes 401(k), used by most private companies, 403(b) and 457, used by education, non-profit and government fields, and pension plans, and account that accumulates over time.

Life/Disability Insurance

The main purpose of life insurance is to provide financial assistance to your family should something happen to you. Disability is divided into short-term and long-term disability.

Other Benefits

Includes Profit Sharing/Stock Options, Tuition Reimbursement, Dependent Care, Employee Assistance Programs, Professional Development, and more.



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NEGOTIATING THE OFFER

You get a job offer. Your first instinct is to say yes...but wait!

It is customary for employers to give you at least a day or two to think about an offer. Determine when they need an answer and understand that this is the window of time to negotiate.

"I'm so excited to get this offer, thank you! Can I take some time to think about it? When should I get back with you?"

NEGOTIATION DO'S

You have to ask. The first offer the employer extends may be the highest they can go. They may not volunteer to offer more unless you mention it. They also can't read your mind - ask for what you want (within reason).

Know the facts of your industry. Researching salary ranges and typical benefits in your field will help you determine what is reasonable and fair. Are moving costs applicable to you? Are signing bonuses common in your industry? Be aware of what the employer can and cannot negotiate. Often, the employer cannot negotiate on company policies like vacation or the dental plan, but they may be able to negotiate your salary or flex time.

Make them want you. You will hold more ground in negotiation if you've already proven that you're a hard worker and willing to go the distance. Arrive early for all interviews and appointments, get information about background checks or other documentation to them as soon as possible, and ask what else you can do.

Request time to meet. To have the negotiation conversation and to ensure you are prepared, set a specific time to talk in person or by phone/Zoom. When scheduling, make sure they know why you want to speak with them and if possible, give them a general overview of what you want to talk about so they are also ready.

Have a value proposition. This should include what you know about the appropriate salary/benefits, the reason you are asking and what value you will bring, and what you would like the offer to be. When speaking with an employer, be direct, concise, polite, calm, poised and positive.

APPRECIATION

"Thank you so much, I am very excited about the offer to work for this organization.

RESEARCH

I've reflected on the offer and hoped we could speak about a salary range of \$_____ to \$_____. This seems to be common in this industry and area, based on my research.

REASONS

I feel as though I fall in the upper part of this range because of my experience in _____ and strengths in _____.

OFFER

If you were able to meet this request, I would gladly accept the position. Is this something that you could help bring about?"

Be ready for the counteroffer. Be prepared for questions about other offers you might have, and be cautious about how to move forward. You might consider waiting until you have the offer in writing before you choose to share. They may also ask if you are ready to accept if they can meet your requests.

Take your time in deciding. If they can't meet your offer fully, it is up to you if you are willing to accept at that point. Find out when you can come back to them to talk more, possibly at a 6 month or year review.

Get it in writing. Be sure to get your final offer in writing from your employer, via letter or email.

NEGOTIATION DON'TS

Don't show your hand too early. Let the employer be the first to mention a specific figure. If they ask you for a starting salary figure, ask them for the typical salary range for that position. However, you should already have a figure in mind that you can justify.

Don't over-negotiate. Don't start your job off on the wrong foot by being overly aggressive. Multiple counteroffers and not understanding their constraints can cause tension when you start working there, or cost you the job altogether.

EXAMPLE COMMUNICATION

ACCEPTING THE OFFER

Once you and the employer have reached an agreement on a job offer, it is time to formally accept the position. In the acceptance email, specify the job you are accepting and the name of your supervisor.

Review your starting salary, basic job responsibilities, and the date you will start work.

Remember to use professional language and to cover all important points.

DECLINING THE OFFER

If you decide that a position or job offer is *not* for you, you should formally decline the offer in writing.

When declining a job offer, tactfully state your reasons for not accepting the job. It is beneficial to convey your appreciation for the interview and the employer's time because you may want to work for them in the future.

Remain professional as you are highlighting your decision to pursue other opportunities. Try not to burn bridges.

BEING DECLINED BY AN EMPLOYER

Unfortunately, you probably will not be offered every position for which you apply. Just because you were not right for a position at one time does not mean that you cannot reapply in the future.

One way to show your genuine interest in a company is to respond personally to communication that you have not been selected. By responding, you will give a positive impression of yourself, and the employer will be more likely to keep you in mind should future openings occur.

Today's Date

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for the offer of Head Mascot in Columbia, Missouri. As we discussed, I am delighted to accept your offer to join the staff of Mascots R Us.

To review our conversation, I will be starting at Mascots R Us on August 17 at an annual base salary of \$45,000 and will receive a review after six months. My primary duties will include receiving and reviewing award applications, and I will be reporting to Sample Supervisor. Upon relocating to Columbia, I will contact you to see what materials I may need before August 17.

Please let me know if you need any more information from me before that time. Again, thank you for this wonderful opportunity.

Sincerely,

Truman T. Tiger

Today's Date

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for offering me the opportunity to be the Head Mascot for Columbia, Missouri. The offer was very appealing and I appreciate the extra time that was given to me to reach a decision.

After much consideration, I have decided to decline your offer.

The decision was very difficult, but I have decided to accept another position that more closely matches my skills and career goals at this time.

Thank you again for your interest. Your consideration has been greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Truman T. Tiger

Today's Date

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for your time interviewing and considering me for this opportunity. Though I was not selected, I enjoyed meeting you and hope you keep me in mind for future openings within your organization.

I certainly welcome any constructive feedback you are willing to share.

Sincerely,

Truman T. Tiger

FIRST YEAR ON THE JOB

Managing Your Career

Develop a career plan. Where would you like to see yourself in the company, or in your profession, in two years? How about in four years? Be sure to manage your expectations.

Be successful on the job. Focus on the job you are currently being asked to do. Also, volunteer for additional projects and show your strong initiative.

Be aware of additional educational opportunities. Continue to seek training, including seminars/workshops, tuition reimbursement programs, and professional orgs in your field.

Be aware of your money. Identify your income and compare to your expenses, evaluate and track your current spending, setting financial goals, and sticking to them.

Plan ahead on requesting time off. One way to demonstrate your commitment to your position is to be mindful of the amount of time you ask off, as well as your punctuality to work!

Organizational Culture

What is organizational culture and management styles? Organizational culture is the unspoken beliefs, customs, and attitudes of a company or organization. Organizational management style is the way management makes decision and relates to their employees.

How are employees rewarded? Are employees rewarded for their individual performance, teamwork, or something else?

Where are the financial resources channeled in the organization? Often, financial resources will be directed towards accomplishing the company's main mission. By knowing the organization's mission, you can begin to understand the organization's priorities.

Building Relationships

Relationships with supervisors. One of the most important relationships formed is the one with your supervisor. Learn what they expect from their employees and then deliver it!

Identify mentors. Find someone who has a good reputation and has been with the organization for a longer period than you have. They can provide insights into the company's culture and help you understand and navigate the company's landscape.

Earning a Raise or Promotion

Work for a raise, but don't expect it the first year. Exercising initiative and promise for future promotions and raises is most important. *Earning* a raise is the real key to getting one.

- Do you perform all tasks to which you are assigned, in addition to going out of your way to help others or to take on new assignments?
- Are you pleasant and easy to get along with? If you are difficult to approach, or not a team player, you will need to improve those interpersonal skills.
- Are you positively contributing to the company? How?
- Do you take initiative at work, and are you dependable? When?

Did You Know...

If you want to know more about what a day in the life is like in your desired job or industry, **INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING** is the best way to get a glimpse. Talk with professionals in your field and learn from their experience.

Find out more:
Guide to Informational Interviewing

next steps:

Talk with a Career Specialist for one-on-one assistance: <https://career.missouri.edu>
Check out more resources at <https://career.missouri.edu> > Resources tab