

NEGOTIATING THE JOB OFFER AND

OTHER CONVERSATION POINTERS

The following tips and suggestions will help you navigate the job offer and acceptance process in a manner that reflects well on you and sets your career on a professional track.

Before the interview:

Like many aspects of the job search effort, doing your homework before the interview can be the key difference in not only earning an offer, but negotiating your best salary and benefits package. First and foremost, research salaries in your industry and of your occupation to learn what a strong offer looks like in your field and location. (See HuskyCareerPrep's Salary Wizard)

During the interview:

Do not bring up salary in the interview. If the employer asks for your desired salary before an offer is made, first indicate that there are a lot of variables that you need to consider, and then counter with a question of your own such as "Is there a figure that recent high-performance new hires have come in at?" If they can't answer that question or push back for a number, give a large range based off of your previous research.

Receiving the offer:

When receiving an offer, it is important to express your enthusiasm for the position; however, do not say "yes" or accept on the spot (you do not want to lose your chance to negotiate), and ask for the offer in writing. Ask for a specific amount of time to think about the offer and get back to them, such as 48 hours or 1-2 weeks.

Evaluating the offer:

Review your research of similar positions in your industry and location to determine if you have been given a strong offer. With this information in hand you are better equipped to methodically describe to the employer how their initial offer compares to benchmark data. Thereby, you are improving your leverage in your follow-up discussion with them on whether or not you have received their best offer. Also consider whether this is a salary and offer you can afford to accept. Create a grid of pros and cons for each organization with the job features. Compare these pros and cons with your top priorities for your life at this time, in respect to your career.

1. Consider benefits in addition to salary

Keep in mind the offer can typically include relocation assistance, education remission or reimbursement, bonus, contributions to a retirement plan, and other fringe benefits such as health care and life insurance as well as paid time off for illness, holidays and vacation. All of those benefits have value beyond the salary, so take the time to fully and clearly understand these compensation features.

2. Determine your salary and compensation needs

Prepare a personal monthly budget covering each of your living expense items such as housing (rent), automobile/transportation, food, education loans, insurance(s), pet care, savings, etc., paying careful attention to the timing of these monthly bills compared to the cash inflow you receive in salary and other income. While you shouldn't use your salary needs as a justification for more pay, it will help you in evaluating if the offer is acceptable to your needs.

3. Determine the value of other job features and their impact on work-life issues

In addition to overall compensation, there might be other important features and issues that you want to take into account when evaluating a job offer. Consider:

- Job title
- Organization's position and stature (prestige) within its industry
- Supervisor's work/communication style
- Organizational culture and your potential fit within it
- Overall work environment and the satisfaction of potential coworkers
- Career growth and professional development opportunities
- Organization's values as they relate to employee work-life balance

Negotiating the Offer:

This organization could be your future employer. Conduct yourself with the utmost of integrity, do not bluff, and certainly do not become visibly impatient with the process or make demands (ultimatums) of the employer.

- After the offer has been made to you in writing, come up with a negotiation plan. Discuss with a Career Consultant what you have researched for industry comparisons and develop your top three priorities for negotiation. You must be able to demonstrate your worth and justify whatever aspects you are negotiating for.
- Start by asking the employer if you can schedule a time to discuss the offer. Begin the conversation by expressing your gratitude for the offer. If your top priority for negotiation is salary, describe in an objective manner why you believe the salary offer should be adjusted enlisting the fact-base you developed to support your position.
 - If the employer accepts your salary proposal you can ask, “Have I received your best offer?” With this question the employer has the opportunity to express a willingness to discuss additional compensation. Conversely, they might simply say “yes” at which point you can either accept and arrange your starting date/time details or ask for a brief window of time during which you can make a final evaluation of the offer(s) you are considering.
 - If the employer says they do not have the ability to negotiate salary, ask if there is room to negotiate other benefits. Make the pitch for these options.
- Do not push back more than twice if they have not been flexible on salary or benefits. Once you have come to an agreement on the offer, it is time to graciously accept the position. By being respectful and objective, you will have done your utmost to negotiate the best compensation package you could with a sense of integrity and one that reflects well on and benefits both you and your future employer.

Balancing multiple offers:

While balancing multiple offers is a great problem to have, it can be difficult to navigate. When the situation arises, ask for more time from each employer and reserve a walk-in time at the CCD to discuss your options with a Career Consultant. While every situation is different, do not under any circumstances accept more than one offer, or accept an offer with the intention to renege (go back on your word) if something ‘better comes along’. This action can have a negative impact on your professional reputation and poorly represents UConn as your college institution.

Rejecting the offer:

Sometimes we are in a situation when we must turn down an offer of employment. When that occurs, it is important to remember that you should do so over the phone (not in an email or text), and provide a brief explanation as to why you are unable to accept the offer, keeping in mind that you want to try as best you can to keep the door open for future contact with this employer. If you find yourself having difficulty coming up with the correct language for this conversation, reserve a walk-in time at the CCD to discuss your options with a Career Consultant.

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