

SALARY NEGOTIATION GUIDE



Use this guide to help you successfully navigate the salary negotiation process to obtain the starting rate you deserve!



USU Career Services

careerservices@usuniversity.edu

www.usuniversity.edu/current-students/career-resources

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CAREER SERVICES



Career Services at United States University was founded in 2022 as a one-stop-shop for career and professional development. Our services are provided to all USU students and alumni at no additional cost.

Students and alumni can access Career Services by visiting our Career Resources website, emailing careerservices@usuniversity.edu and/or scheduling an appointment online at:

www.usuniversity.edu/current-students/career-resources

MEET THE TEAM



Logann Dolan, MBA, CCSP | She/Her
Career & Alumni Services Specialist

✉ logann.dolan@usuniversity.edu

Logann has over 8+ years of experience in higher education and makes an impact through the exploration of career pathways, offering personality, interests, values, and skills assessments, resume and cover letter reviews, and exposing students and alumni to various career-related resources.

UNDERSTANDING SALARY

Understanding the value of your education and professional experience plays an information role in salary conversations and negotiations, especially as a new graduate. Working at a pay level you deserve and are comfortable with gives you a sense of motivation, and as you progress and move forward with your career, you can later ask for a raise or starting salary that aligns with your expectations.

DO YOUR RESEARCH:

Understanding the market will help you determine your salary value based on your skills, education and training, work experience, and geographic location. Once you know the landscape, you'll know how and when to negotiate a job offer, promotion, or raise.

- Before you negotiate a job offer or raise, ensure you do your research using free salary calculators and surveys.
- Your value depends on job title, location, education, training, skill set, and work experience.
- Negotiations can include all aspects of compensation, including salary, bonuses, stock options, benefits, perks, vacation time, and more.
- Most hiring managers expect candidates to negotiate salaries, so if you neglect this stage after receiving an offer, you are doing yourself a disservice.

FREE SALARY RESEARCH RESOURCES:



[Payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com) (detailed salary reports and information for a variety of careers)



[Glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com) (for both salary and interview transparency)



[Educate to Career Salary Calculator](#) (designed for recent college graduates)



[Salary.com](https://www.salary.com) (browse by industry, income, and other factors)



[Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) (a website maintained by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor)

WHEN SHOULDN'T YOU NEGOTIATE SALARY?

Although most employers expect candidates to negotiate starting salaries, there are times when it makes sense to accept the offer. You might decide not to ask for a higher salary if your research indicates that your industry or the company culture frowns on negotiating, for example. If you're desperate for work and looking for a stop-gap job until you figure out a long-term career plan, you might also decide to take the employer's first offer.

6 NEGOTIATION TIPS

There are many things to consider when starting salary negotiation conversations. Each position will present different time frames, challenges, and things to consider based on the role and the organization. Here are six simple tips to use when approaching this process regardless of the role.

1

Wait for the Appropriate Time:

Once you know what you should be earning, how do you go about getting it? Start by being patient. When interviewing for a new position, do your best not to bring up compensation until the employer makes you an offer.

2

Resist Throwing out the First Number:

If you're asked what your salary requirements are, say that they are open based upon the position and the overall compensation package. Or tell the employer you'd like to know more about the responsibilities and the challenges of the job prior to discussing salary.

3

Base Your Salary Request on Data

If you're forced to give a number, provide a salary range based upon the research you've done up front. Use this research to inform your negotiating technique. Talk about what's appropriate for the role, based on your experience and what you have to offer. Some employers list a salary range in the job description to give you a ballpark idea of the starting rate, use this to your advantage!

4

Take Your Time:

Once you've received the offer, you don't need to accept (or reject) it right away. A simple "I need to think it over" can get you an increase in the original offer. It's also important to thoroughly look through the contract or offer entirely to ensure there are no surprise clauses or things that were not discussed previously.

5

Negotiate Benefits:

Consider whether there are employee benefits and perks that might be negotiable, even if the salary isn't. For example, the employer might be willing to offer you telecommuting privileges once a week, or an alternate schedule. Depending on your preferences and situation, arrangements like that might be worth accepting a slightly lower paycheck.

6

Consider Saying No:

If you're ambivalent about the position, a "no" could bring you a better offer. Just be careful not to decline a job you really want. There's always a risk that the employer may accept your answer and move on to the next candidate.

WORDS AND PHRASES TO USE DURING THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

How to appropriately ask for more is always a challenge for job seekers. However, having the confidence and the knowledge and resources to back you up can make you even more successful in this process.

"I am excited by the opportunity to work together."

We often think of salary negotiation as a battle for more money and employers trying to stay in budget. However, we should consider the process collaborative where both parties (job seeker and employer) benefit. Once you receive the initial offer, express enthusiasm and gratitude for this opportunity.

"Based on my research..."

As job seekers, we always aim for a higher dollar salary; however, it's important to have realistic expectations and ensure you do your homework. Using this phrase in your salary conversations shows you are educated in market trends and understand your value compared to other candidates.

"Similarly situated employees"

"Similarly situated employees" are individuals who do what you do within the company. Use resources like Glassdoor to see real reported salaries from individuals at the company you are interviewing with -- this will give you a clear understanding of existing salaries at the organization.

"Is this number flexible at all?"

If you are offered a number that is lower than your expected or desired salary range, it's okay to ask for clarification. This is a graceful way to put the ball in the employer's court and allow them time to counter with a higher offer or other perks.

"I would be more comfortable if..."

Avoid using blunt phrases like "I need" or "I want" as this can be a red flag to an employer. By expressing your desired salary with "I would feel more comfortable if...", this gently lets the employer know what you are looking for. You can follow up: "I'd feel more comfortable if we could settle on a base salary of \$75,000."

"Do you mind if I take a couple of days to consider your offer?"

One of the common mistakes job seekers make is not allowing yourself more time to review the offer entirely and come up with a strategy for counteroffering. Even if the offer meets or exceeds your expectations, taking your time is okay. When asking for more time, be clear with your intentions and let them know when you will respond by. When you are ready to counteroffer, use written resources like an email when submitting so you can be deliberate and articulate as possible with what you are trying to say and ask for. This also provides you a sense of security since you will have an email chain to refer back to if needed.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [Salary Negotiation Scripts for Any Role](#)
 - [The Best Strategies to Negotiate Salaries for Women](#)
 - [Tips for Talking Salary at Interviews for Women](#)
 - [What NOT to Say When Negotiating Salaries](#)
 - [Negotiating Secrets to Help You Land a Higher Starting Salary](#)
 - [What is a Good Salary in the U.S.?](#)
 - [When to Ask for a Raise at Work?](#)
 - [How to Ask for a Pay Raise](#)
 - [A Career Coach Explains Exactly How to Write a Salary Negotiation Email](#)
 - [How to Write a Salary Negotiation Email](#)
 - [How to Write a Counteroffer Letter](#)
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NEED SUPPORT?

Connect with us!

USU Career Services is here to help. **Schedule an appointment with a Career Staff Member [online](#) or email us at careerservices@usuniversity.edu.**



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