Tips from Co-op & Career Services: Salary Negotiation

Introduction:

Should you bother to negotiate? Absolutely! The key is to do it in a way that gains you not only a higher income, but the employer’s trust and respect.

- **Dress and act the part**
  Remember that when you go to the interview much of your negotiation is already non-verbally communicated by your image and bearing.

- **Be patient**
  Wait until after the job has been firmly offered to discuss or negotiate pay.

- **Research the normal salary range for this type of position**
  If you have close contacts at the hiring company, they may be able to provide you with the actual salary guidelines for the job grade or position. Otherwise, you can find out what other companies are paying individuals with your skills and education by checking out third party research.

- **Don’t be the first to give a definitive figure**
  Ask for the pay range for this position before offering any figure you have in mind.

- **Keep your full attention on the person you are negotiating with**
  Listen and watch for verbal and behavioral cues that will give you a better idea of the real needs, values, and aspirations of the other party.

- **Be comfortable with silence**
  In a negotiation situation the person who has the least tolerance for silence will fill the void by speaking – often with concession.

- **Don’t sell yourself short**
  Never downplay your strengths or over-emphasize your weaknesses.

- **Give yourself time**
  Do not put pressure on yourself to make a decision or grant concessions on the spot. If they tell you the offer is final, say that you’ll need a day or so to think about it.

- **Negotiate for the future as well as the present**
  If you are told the salary isn’t flexible, perhaps another area is. See if you can increase the total value of your compensation package through benefits.

- **Be Sure**
  Never say “no” or turn down an offer until you are absolutely certain you must do so. How you negotiate your salary shows the employer how you will do business and negotiate on the company’s behalf once you are hired.

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