

Such a letter will probably cover fringe benefits, moving arrangements, starting date, etc. It is good to give the company a time frame in which you will make a decision.

1. Letters of Appreciation

When you return home, take time to write a letter of appreciation. This will demonstrate your continued interest, good manners and attention to detail.

Tips on Salary Negotiation

The following is a list of strategies and tips that will help you along the bumpy road of salary negotiation. It is important to be confident, enthusiastic, professional and polite as you enter the ring. But, above all, be yourself!

Right Time to Discuss Salary

Do not discuss salary until you have been offered a position. Discussing salary during an interview is considered unprofessional because the purpose of an interview is to demonstrate your skills and abilities and how they match the company's needs. Waiting until you are offered the job will give you the leverage you need to possibly negotiate for a higher salary.

Other Benefits

Benefits and perks are also valuable when negotiating salary and can add up to 40 percent of your salary. Negotiable benefits include stock options, hiring bonuses, moving stipends, employee discounts, tuition reimbursement, vacation and sick leave. Perks include company cars, club memberships, parking, expense accounts, cell phones and laptops.

Research the Company Before You Negotiate

It is vital to gather information about your prospective employer prior to negotiations. Learn what the company does and its status in the business community. Most importantly research the salary range of the job you are applying for. You can find salary ranges by using the Career Services Web site to find links to several useful sites with salary and cost of living information.

Start High and Work Towards the Middle

Example 1.

If the employer offers you \$35,000 and you believe you deserve \$38,000, ask for \$40,000 and then work backward toward your target salary.

2. Employer Response

If you do not hear from the employer within three weeks, then you may want to contact the employer (by phone, if you choose) to inquire about your status.

Example 2.

If your research indicates that the average salary for the position is \$28,000, you might give the employer a range of \$28,000 to \$42,000. Aim for the top!

Know Your Market Value

There are no clear-cut guidelines for assessing your market value. Based on company research, your education and experience, and your skills and capabilities you should be able to personally assess what you are worth.

Never Stop Selling Yourself

When negotiating for the best possible salary and benefit package, it is important to continue showing the employer how hiring you will improve the organization's bottom line, services, image, etc. Remind the employer of transferable skills you have that may save the company money.

Be Willing to Walk Away

Negotiating for a salary may take the form of a game. You make an offer, the employer counter-offers. The game continues until a mutual decision is made. Never go into a bargaining session thinking that you must accept the position. The employer may see your desperation and offer you much less than you are worth. You may appear more confident if you are willing to walk away.

Put the Offer in Writing

After you have successfully negotiated the salary and benefits package, it is vital that you put your agreements in writing. Write down the terms such as salary, benefits, perks, job title and starting date. This will provide a record in case there is a question in the future. Remember, always be professional as you go through this process.

As you get more experience you will become more comfortable and more skilled.

Good luck!