

NEGOTIATION PROCESS & FLOW

Congratulations! You've survived the interview process and you've been offered the job. Success is in your sights, and if you can manage the negotiation process with skill and confidence you may just have bagged your dream job. The negotiation process can be intimidating, and it's tempting to grab the offer with both hands — but don't! Poor negotiating at this stage could mean losing out, not just in terms of your starting salary but throughout your time in this position. Handling this process well will put you in place to reap big rewards.

Knowing what to expect during negotiations is very important. Keep reading for strategies to stay in control of your negotiation conversation at each step along the way.

THE INTERVIEW

Delay the conversation. If you can, push the conversation about salary until the end of the interview. The later in the process you talk about money, the more time you have to demonstrate your professional value to the interviewer before salary negotiation begins. Show the interviewer your skills and worth by explaining your accomplishments — and then talk salary. You need to convince them that the work you've done and are capable of doing warrants greater compensation because of what you can bring to the position. By swaying the conversation away from salary and toward your skills you can show you're a good fit for the company, and by the time they bring up salary again, they may be willing to offer more than they would have at the beginning of the process.



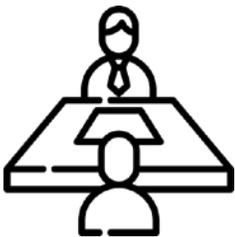
BEFORE THE OFFER

Be honest about who you are and what you need. A successful negotiation starts when you arrive prepared to talk about what you are good at and what's important to you. Do your skills translate well to your next job? What's the minimum salary you need to make? How much flexibility do you need, given your current life situation? What matters most to you in your next job: title, salary, or benefits? This type of preparation is imperative for a great negotiation. If you haven't identified your priorities, you may not be prepared for a mutually beneficial conversation. If you need help preparing for this part of the negotiation process, check out our [Assessor](#) service.



THE OFFER

Beware the verbal offer. HR professionals may begin negotiations with a verbal offer and ask you to commit to that number, because from their standpoint, getting a verbal commitment before making an actual offer detracts candidates from shopping the offer to other companies or their own company. Be aware of this tactic and be prepared to delay verbal commitment by saying something like, "Thank you for this opportunity. I'm looking forward to seeing the details and the compensation package as a whole, and then we can move forward to the next steps."



Ask your recruiter for their compensation range. Answering the recruiter's question, "What are your salary expectations?" can sometimes work against you. If you are not prepared, you may either undersell yourself or put yourself out of range for the position. Try answering back with a question of your own. When you ask, "What's your salary range for this position?" you give both the recruiter and yourself the freedom to continue the conversation in a way that works for everyone.

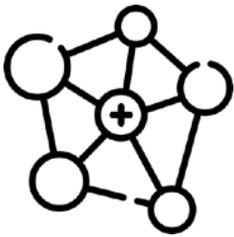


Carefully consider the written offer. Usually a company will give you a written offer and two to seven days to accept it. They have spent a long time getting to this stage and they want to move quickly. But this is exactly when you should take your time. You need to comb through every line and make sure you think about everything you can and should negotiate (Lynsey link to all you can negotiate).



Questions or concerns? Now is the time to ask any questions you have regarding the organization and the role, including the details of the work you'll be doing every day.

- How will your success be measured? What are the specific goals and outcomes desired, and how will you be evaluated?
- What does the benefits package include, and for what benefits are you eligible? When does your eligibility begin?
- Are there other benefits the company offers its employees — things like gym memberships, flexible work hours, tuition reimbursement, or professional development? Take a look at [other negotiation possibilities here: I Can Negotiate That?](#)



Seek legal advice. It's important to know all of your obligations to an employer before signing a contract. An employment lawyer will help you understand important aspects of the contract, from your start date to how your severance is structured. What are restrictive covenants and how do those restrictions affect you after you've resigned? WAGER works with a talented group of legal experts that can help if you don't know where to start.



Most importantly, don't be in a hurry. Being patient during the negotiation process can be difficult; it's normal to want to get things settled and get started! However, rushing means you are more likely to make mistakes and leave money on the table. When is the start date, and when does the company need to have your decision? Find this out before responding. Whoever is more flexible about time has the advantage.



A FEW WAYS TO RESPOND

Getting the first job offer is exciting, but the last thing you want to do is take that leap without thinking it over. When you receive a verbal job offer, take a deep breath and ask how much time you have to accept. After you've carefully considered your decision, there are a few different ways you can respond.

If this were the 1950s and you were given a job, you'd just say yes! But salaries and compensation packages are more complex these days and the decisions you make now can have life-long impact — especially for women. Take a methodical approach to your response, and when in doubt talk to a [WAGER Pro!](#)

Some of our favorite responses to an initial offer are:

"I am excited by the opportunity to work together. Let me take a few days to look over your offer." Take your time. As a former recruiter, I know first-hand that most jobs needed to be filled yesterday. You are now in the driver's seat. Take a pause, read the offer line by line, and be ready to make your counteroffer. Take a look at our article "I Can Negotiate That?" to evaluate what's important to you. Sign up for our Negotiator package and connect with a compensation lawyer. Take your time to dot the is and cross the ts. Though not impossible, it's hard to change the terms once you've signed the document.

"Is this the best offer?" If you want to make sure what's being proposed to you is the best offer on the table, ask your interviewer, "If my colleagues were to share their salary numbers with me, would I still think this is a great opportunity?" Make the recruiter double down on their offer; keep them on their toes.

"If you can do this today, I'm on board." Often recruiters are just as anxious as you are for salary negotiations to come to a close. This means that if you can explicitly spell out what it would take for you to accept an offer, you'll be doing recruiters and hiring managers a favor.

[Find out more ways to respond here: Phrases To Use When Negotiating.](#)

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