

EFFECTIVELY NEGOTIATING SALARY PACKAGES

Part of the job search process can include salary negotiation. With a basic knowledge of negotiation, your anxiety will be reduced and your success rate for negotiating will increase. There are several ways to make the process of salary negotiating effective. Start by taking a good look at your own salary requirements as well as developing an understanding of what your skills are worth in the current employment market.

- Research salary ranges before you begin the interviewing process. Contact the professional association which represents your career field for salary information. Look at your monthly cash requirements. Keep in mind that your pay cheque after taxes is approximately 28% less than your gross monthly salary. Include savings and contingencies in your budget planning. (You do not need to tell anyone your salary requirement: it only provides you a foundation on which to make decisions.
- Enter the salary negotiation portion of your interview with a firm understanding of your skills and what they are worth to different segments of the economy and in a variety of industry settings. Salary range information is available from several sources, including Wage Line (www.wageline.qld.gov.au), TMP Worldwide (<http://au.eresourcing.tmp.com/salary/australia/>), Seek (www.seek.com) and Wage Net (www.wagenet.gov.au).
- The first inquiry about salary may come in the form of an application. When completing application forms, be sure to use “open”, “negotiable” or “competitive”. Avoid stating a specific figure.
- Factor the organisations entire compensation package (ie. Tuition benefits, superannuation, health plan, and any perks) along with salary in your negotiation discussion. Compute the dollar worth of these benefits and add this figure to the salary for a more realistic picture of how the organisation compensates. If it is important to you, you may decide to negotiate benefits rather than an actual dollar increase.
- When an interviewer asks for salary history or salary range, he/she is interested in establishing a starting point for negotiation. The important thing is to avoid basing your desired salary on your current salary. Do not lie about your past salary reference checks can easily provide this information. Provide information about why your salary may have been lower, if appropriate.
- When starting a salary range, it is acceptable to extend the range to approximately \$5,000. This shows that you are within the employer’s price range but interested in somewhat more compensation.
- Determine opportunities for promotion. Job progression is an important factor in making salary decisions. Ask how promotions and salary reviews are handled.

By taking a good look at your own salary needs, understanding the current market, and approaching salary as something that you and the employer will agree on as mutually beneficial, your chances of successfully negotiating a salary are greatly enhanced.