

## EVALUATING/NEGOTIATING JOB OFFERS

Below are some criteria you may want to consider when evaluating your offer. Use the *Evaluating Job Offers* worksheet on page 55 to write down and rank your criteria for one or more offers.

### Work/Lifestyle Values

Before accepting a job offer, review what is important and fulfilling to you about work. What values do you hold that you want to carry over to the work arena? Also consider how you like to work and what you would like in a work environment?

### Industry/Organization

Before accepting a job offer, research the financial stability, growth, and trends of the industry and organization. Has the company gone through significant layoffs lately? How does the company's financial stability look now? What is their policy if more layoffs are needed? If the company is a start up, are they confident in their financial backing past the initial phase? If there are any concerns, address them with the organization contact, before accepting the offer. Resources for researching organizations can be found in the Career Resource Library and on the CDC Links website, under "Researching Organizations/ Salary", at [cardinalcareers.stanford.edu/links/](http://cardinalcareers.stanford.edu/links/).

### Job

When you receive a job offer, it is good to review the responsibilities and daily activities of the position. You may have learned more about the position while going through the interview process and it is important to evaluate this information.

### Your Next Step

After evaluating all aspects of the industry and position to determine your "fit" with the job, your next step is to evaluate your entire job offer to determine if you need or want to negotiate. Usually negotiations are done with the Human Resources representative you have been working with, but occasionally they are done directly with your manager. If you are unsure, you can ask.

## SALARY NEGOTIATION

### The Organization's Perspective

Salary doesn't necessarily correlate with the value you add or the contribution you make to society. It's simply the amount the market will bear to purchase your services, which include your skills, expertise, knowledge, and special talents.

Most organizations, both large and small, establish salary ranges for every position based on standards and general practices for the field. It's in the organization's best interest to hire you for fair market value for several reasons. First, the hiring process can be long and expensive. It would be inefficient for an organization to make low offers only to be rejected and have to begin the recruiting process all over again. Second, organizations want to hire and retain good employees. It's unproductive to pay you less than other employers.

Organizations determine where an employee falls in the salary range based on experience and special expertise or knowledge. Therefore, a recent college graduate hired for an entry-level position with limited experience will be paid somewhere between the low- to mid-range, reserving the midpoint salaries for more experienced individuals.

### The What, Why, and When of Salary Negotiation

#### What Is It?

Salary negotiation is the process of reaching an agreement on what

an organization will pay for your skills, knowledge and experience. Contrary to popular belief, this is not an adversarial process. It is in both the organization's and your best interest to come to a mutually beneficial agreement.

#### Why or Why Not Negotiate?

The only reason to negotiate is to get fair market value for your skills, experience and knowledge. *Therefore, it is unwise to negotiate for negotiation's sake.* For example, sometimes job seekers think a hiring manager expects them to negotiate, or that salaries should be negotiated as a general principle. Although organizations respect employees who can articulate the value they add, recent grads (or anyone else) can quickly alienate potential employers if they are inappropriate and over zealous in their approach to negotiating their salary to "get a fair deal."

#### When Should You Negotiate?

Two things need to happen before you negotiate. First, begin discussing salary only after you have a received a formal offer, preferably in writing (refer to the Frequently Asked Questions section for what to say if asked the "money" question before a formal offer.) Initiating a discussion regarding salary before this point could eliminate you prematurely from hiring consideration. Second, negotiate only after you have evaluated the entire job offer package and researched what the market will pay for your services in this field. This research will provide you with the evidence you need to determine if the salary offered is reasonable or whether you should make a case for a higher salary. The fact that your friend has received a higher salary for a similar job at a different company is insufficient data for negotiation purposes. Additionally, some companies that can't offer a higher salary may try to offset this by offering other "perks" such as extra vacation days. Although you may still choose to negotiate your salary, be familiar with your entire job offer before approaching an organization.

### The Salary Negotiation Process

#### Before Negotiating

When you receive a job offer you can either: accept it, reject it or negotiate for something else. If you decide to negotiate for something else, you need to know three things before you begin: 1) your market value; 2) what you want; and 3) the job.

#### 1) KNOW YOUR MARKET VALUE

Your success in negotiating a higher compensation package (and the only reason you should be negotiating) is contingent on data you have which suggests your market value is higher than that reflected in the offer. To determine your market value, review some of the resources in the CDC Career Resource Library, and the salary links in the CDC Links website, [cardinalcareers.stanford.edu/links/](http://cardinalcareers.stanford.edu/links/). Often new college grads don't have the experience or expertise to warrant a higher salary. However, there are exceptions. Here are some salary negotiation "positions of strength" for new college grads:

- You have gained relevant work experience through internships or summer jobs which positively impacts your ability to do the job.
- You have a particular technical expertise which is in high demand.
- You have an advanced degree in a specific and sought-after area of expertise.
- You have a written offer from another company that states a higher salary.