

## OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

### NEGOTIATING JOB OFFERS

Outlined below are the issues you should consider in order to make sure you are provided with the best job "package." We recommend that you also review the *Salary and Cost of Living Websites* fact sheet on the OCS website at <http://tinyurl.com/sipafactsheets> (Fact Sheets: Career Development).

**1. You should be ready to negotiate when you start the interview process.**

That is, you should do your homework regarding general salary ranges for that type of position, competitive health care packages, and retirement options.

**2. You only begin the negotiation process after an offer has been made.**

Don't start haggling over an employment package until you have received an offer of employment.

**3. Many people worry that an offer will be rescinded if they try to negotiate.**

Be assured that, unless you demand something completely unreasonable in your negotiations, a potential employer will usually not rescind an offer. Therefore, don't be afraid to make reasonable requests during the negotiation process. All the employer can say is "No," which only leaves you back where you started.

**4. There may be room for negotiation.**

If you are not entirely happy with the offer, there may be room for negotiation. Negotiation usually involves salary issues, but may also have to do with job responsibilities, title, or benefits. The key to negotiation is demonstrating your value to the prospective employer. They won't give you more money just because you need or want it. They might pay you more, if they see that you are worth it. That is why you should always be able to back up your request for more money with specific examples of why you feel it's fair and how your skills and/or experience warrant this request. A large student loan is not a viable reason for requesting a higher salary.

**5. You need to research typical salaries.**

To know what salaries are typical for the position you are considering, you can consult various sources of information on salaries. These include: industry professionals; online salary surveys (see OCS's fact sheet, *Salary Surveys*); Bureau of Labor Statistics publications (e.g., the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*); job listings online or in other publications which can give you a sense of typical salaries and career guides for various fields. Be sure to consider your whole compensation package – sign-on bonuses, benefits, vacation time, profit-sharing, etc. – when deciding if you want to negotiate for a higher salary.

Also, you may view OCS employment statistics online at: <https://sipa.columbia.edu/careers/employment-statistics>.

**6. You should be aware of all of the following factors when making a decision about whether to negotiate or not.**

**The Job**

What are my duties/responsibilities? What percentage of my time would be spent in each of these?  
Is this job a good match for my talents/skills/interests/personality style?

(continued)

Who would I work with?

Does this job fit in with my career goals and ambitions?

Who would supervise me? Would I supervise anyone?

How would I be trained?

What would my hours be? How many hours per week would I work?

Where would this job lead? Is it promotable? Could I transfer to another area of the organization?

Is the job location convenient? Is there any chance of being transferred or relocated?

### **The Organization**

Is it financially stable?

Are they growing? What has the past growth rate been?

Have they had any lay-offs of employees within the past year?

Who are their competitors and how are they doing?

What is the organization's management style or "culture"?

Do I respect the organization's philosophy and goals?

### **The Compensation Package**

Is the salary offered in line with typical salaries for this type of job?

When is salary reviewed? What are the typical increases?

How are the benefits -- medical/dental/life insurance?

Are there retirement or profit-sharing plans?

Do I get an expense account or company car?

How much sick leave and vacation time would I have?

Is there tuition reimbursement?

Is there relocation assistance?