

GET THE JOB

How to Negotiate Your Salary

Securing a new job begins with the painstaking preparation of a résumé, then continues through an interview phase which can be nerve-wracking, followed by a winnowing process.

But it's not over, even if you are named the final candidate. You still have to negotiate a new salary — and this last stage might be the most difficult aspect of all, if you're not prepared.

Here's a breakdown on how to complete the last leg of your hiring journey.

THE PROPER MINDSET IS KEY

Whether you're negotiating for a starting salary or at the highest levels of international diplomacy, successful agreements require a sense of confidence but with a willingness to compromise. You'll need plenty of persistence and a healthy dose of professionalism. If you don't push hard enough, your salary may never catch up with your peers. Push too hard, however, and they may decide to go with another



© ADOBE STOCK

candidate. There's natural back-and-forth associated with this kind of dialogue. Handle the salary negotia-

tions with a balance of directness and aplomb, and it will only confirm their decision to hire you.

COME PREPARED WITH FACTS

Knowing the job's market value before you sit down to

discuss salary figures gives you leverage. You'll need to evaluate your pay based not just on the position, but also the cost of living where you'll be working and your specific professional background — including education and experience. Salary.com and SalaryExpert.com are excellent resources; the U.S. Department of Labor can also provide key information from your industry.

DON'T NEGOTIATE AGAINST YOURSELF

Don't let your excitement for a new job, or your exhaustion with a lengthy process, create a situation where you rush to an unfavorable conclusion. Settling for their first offer could have salary implications for years to come. Employers and potential employees alike have a range of acceptable salary figures. Keep in mind, however, that you don't have to immediately discuss your bottom number — only the top. You lose negotiation power by revealing too much too early. The two sides should then begin moving toward a baseline that suits both interests. If they don't? Remember that quality candidates are becoming rarer in today's job market. Don't accept too quickly. Be prepared to turn an offer down if you can't get to a happy medium.