



SALARY AND COMPENSATION

Before you discuss pay or negotiate salary with a prospective employer, you should find out how much the job *and you* are worth. Do some salary research, so you are prepared to negotiate a job offer that's realistic, reasonable, and reflects your value. Some things to keep in mind as you research salary include:

- **Geographic region:** Salaries in Chicago and Milwaukee will be higher than those in northeast Wisconsin because the cost of living in those areas is higher.
- **Experience level:** Be sure to use salary data that reflects your experience level: entry-level, mid-career (5 years of experience), and experienced.
- **Industry:** Salary or wage can vary by industry, for example an accountant working for a large manufacturer may make more than an accountant working in a small non-profit organization.
- **Employer size:** National or international companies may offer higher compensation than smaller regional companies.
- **Compensation is more than just salary:** Be sure to consider the entire compensation package when evaluating offers. This can include medical and dental benefits, vacation, short- and long-term disability, life insurance, and other benefits. Also consider the cost of your commute or housing if you are relocating.

Once you know what you should be earning, how do you go about getting it? Start by being patient. When interviewing for a new position, do your best not to bring up compensation until the employer makes you an offer. If you're asked what your salary requirements are, say that they are open based upon the position and the overall compensation package, or tell the employer you would like to know more about the responsibilities and the challenges of the job prior to discussing salary. Another option is to give the employer a salary range based on your salary research.

After the offer: Most offers include an expiration or response date. It is essential to respond to the offer within this timeframe. Evaluate the offer and develop a list of questions for the employer. Send an email thanking the employer for the offer and expressing your excitement about the opportunity. Next, explain that you have a few questions before accepting the offer and provide your questions to the individual who sent you the offer.

Once your questions have been answered, decide whether you want to negotiate for a better compensation package. Keep in mind that some entry-level salaries/wages are fixed, and the employer may not be able to negotiate. However, if your salary research indicates that the offer is less than you believe you and the job are worth, determine what salary you would accept and propose something slightly higher than your desired salary. Be prepared to explain your reasons for negotiating a better offer. Continue to emphasize your desire to accept the opportunity and your confidence that an agreement can be reached.

DISCLAIMER: Salary negotiation carries a risk that the employer could withdraw their initial offer and move on to another candidate. [Meet with an Employment Advisor](#) to discuss your salary research and negotiation strategy.

SALARY NEGOTIATION DO'S & DON'TS

These dos and don'ts of salary negotiation can help you get the salary you deserve, whether you're entertaining a job offer or asking for a raise.

- **Do research salaries in your field:** Look at recent salary surveys, talk to others working in your field, and contact your trade or professional association to find out what other people are paid for doing the same work. Remember that salaries differ by geographic region.
- **Don't compare your salary or offer to what friends working in other fields make:** You may envy your friends who are earning more money than you are but resist the urge to make those comparisons.
- **Do consider how much experience you have:** Those with more experience can generally expect to earn more. Remember to talk about the amount of experience you have if it will help you negotiate a higher salary. If you don't have a lot of experience, be realistic about the salary for which you can ask.



- **Don't talk about how much money you need:** When negotiating salary, don't tell your boss (or future boss) that you need to make more money because your bills are high, your house was expensive, or your child is starting college, focus instead on what you contribute (or can contribute) to the success of the business.
- **Do talk about the salary you deserve:** When presenting your case during a salary negotiation, talk about how you will earn the salary you are requesting. Highlight what you have done, or will do, for the company. Also, discuss the salaries in your field based on your research.
- **Do be flexible:** When going through a salary negotiation, you aren't likely to get the exact amount of money you want. You and the employer will come to an agreement through compromise. The key is to figure out how much you are willing to compromise and what you will do if your offer is not what you were hoping to achieve.

SALARY INFORMATION

FVTC 2023 Graduate Outcomes Report

<https://www.fvtc.edu/Portals/0/PDFs/About-Us/Graduate-Reports/2023-FVTC-graduate-employment-research-report.pdf>

FVTC/WTCS Program Salary Information-Last 5 Years

<https://www.fvtc.edu/Portals/0/PDFs/About-Us/Graduate-Reports/Grad-Employment-Summary.pdf>

Wisconsin Department of Labor

<https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/query>

U.S. Department of Labor

<https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>

[Salary.com](https://www.salary.com)

[Glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com)

[Payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com)