



Stanford eCorner

Salary and Job Negotiations

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Stanford instructor and [Arbor Advisors](#) partner Stan Christensen strongly advises career carvers to save salary negotiations for last, and not to overlook the myriad other topics of new employment to be discussed, including time off, assignment specifics, start dates, etc. When it is time to discuss dollars, do your due diligence and have competitive salaries at hand. This will make asking for more money a mere matter of fact, rather than an emotional escapade. Other tips include getting promises in writing, and dealing directly with your future boss whenever possible.



Transcript

Let's talk about actually negotiating your salary and your compensation because you're going to have to do that. The first thing I would say is job negotiations aren't just about the money. We talked in class about the problem once you start talking about money, it's hard to talk about other things. So make a list of the things when you're negotiating your job, and let's say you're negotiating Google, what are some of the things you're going to negotiate? Why are you going to negotiate your salary? You're going to negotiate you know possibly your time off. You're going to negotiate your roles and responsibility. You might have some say about what group you work in or who your manager is going to be. You might have some say about your start date. All those things are easier to talk about before you talk about your compensation because once people start talking about money, they tend to not have a very easy time talking about other things. And so you want a look at compensation as a basket of things as opposed to just your salary. Number one, bring objective criteria to the table.

So let's, let's say that you're going for that job at Google. Objective criteria means outside standards about what you should get paid. So you want to know what other people at Google are being paid for that role. You want to know what people are being paid at Yahoo or Microsoft or other similar companies and you want to come with that kind of information. Because you basically want to be paid certainly out of school what's fair. OK. And the only way to know if it's fair is to attach it to some outside objective standard. It is always surprising to me, it seems very intuitive and very obvious but most people don't do this homework and know it. Second on, we've talked about class, it's really important for salary and job negotiations is know your alternative. OK.

If you sit down with a hiring manager at Google and you guys can't come up with an agreement, what are you walking to? Do you have a job at Yahoo? Do you have a job at Microsoft? So knowing your BATNA, your best alternative to negotiating agreement and going into that negotiation knowing what your walk away is gives you a lot of power, right? And I would often go to the place I wanted to work second most and negotiate as much as I could there and get my offer solidified as much as I could. And then I would go with my first choice in this case, in this example is Google and I'd go with that offer from Yahoo in my back pocket knowing what my alternative would. That gives me a lot of power in the negotiation. Try if you can to negotiate with your boss or your direct superior. It's difficult when you're dealing with one person in the negotiation and then you're going to work with someone different. Why is that difficult? Well number one, the HR people often, to use them as an example, I promise you all kinds of things, oh yeah you can definitely be in that group and you were kind not. And then you talked to the

higher manager and there was a lack of communication between the two. And so to the extent that you can you want to work out your road map and plan out, you know, your operating plan, the other things that we talked about with the person you're going to be working for. It's also very important you get as much in writing as you can. I can't tell you how many students have come to me a couple of months in that job and say, wow you know it was great, I got this offer at Google and they told me I'd be in the, you know, product marketing division and research when I got there and it was totally different.

And so I think it's really important to get things on paper so that expectations are clear and operational and implementable. And people sometimes don't do that.