

NAVIGATING JOB OFFERS

YOUR HARD WORK IS PAYING OFF AND YOU RECEIVED A JOB OFFER. HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER AS YOU MAKE YOUR DECISION:

THE OFFER

- **Get it in writing.**

If you are given a verbal offer, request an email or letter with all of the details. Ask for the total compensation package information, including salary and benefits.

THE JOB

- **Consider these questions:**

What are the responsibilities?

What will the daily work be like?

Who will be your supervisor?

Will you have access to

mentorship, training and

professional development?

What is the company culture like?

What type of work schedule is expected?

THE COMPENSATION PACKAGE

Salary

- Research competitive salary averages by using the National Association of Colleges and Employers Job Seekers Salary Calculator at www.ndsu.edu/career, under "Job Search Resources."
- Consider base salary, signing bonuses and annual bonuses.
- When might you be eligible for a salary review or promotion?

Benefits

- Insurance: What insurance benefits are available? Consider health insurance, life insurance, disability insurance (long term, short term), accidental death and dismemberment insurance. What are your needs now and in the future? What are your out-of-pocket costs, such as premiums and deductibles? How soon does coverage begin?
- Paid leave: How much vacation and sick leave do employees earn? What are the policies on using paid time off?
- Relocation/moving costs: Does the company offer a relocation package? What expenses are covered?

Retirement

- What type of plan is offered? What are the employer and employee contributions? What time period is required to be vested in the program?

ADDITIONAL FACTORS

- Location: Is the geographic location what you prefer? Is the salary reflective of the cost of living in the region?
- Travel: What travel is required? Does it fit with your personal goals and lifestyle?
- Career path/advancement: How does the position fit into your personal career goals? What will you learn in the position? What advancement opportunities are available?

HOW TO REQUEST AN EXTENSION

When you receive an offer, most employers will give you a timeline to accept or decline the offer. It is permissible to ask for an extension to this timeline if you need to. It is recommended that you make a personal call to the employer and diplomatically request an extension. Follow up with an email to confirm the new date (see below). However, keep in mind employers are not required to grant an extension and some may not be willing to do so.

Example:

Dear (Name),

Thank you again for the offer of (position title) at (Company Name). I am excited about the position and appreciate the opportunity. You requested I give you a decision by (date); it is a very important decision for me and I need some additional time to ensure I have all the information necessary to make the decision.

I am following up on our phone conversation today where I requested an extension to (date). I would very much appreciate it if you are able to accommodate my extension, and I assure you I will be able to make a decision by that time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
(Your Name)

SALARY NEGOTIATION

Employers consider multiple factors when establishing a salary offer. Your level of experience, type of degree, the nature of the work, as well as your skills and preparation all play a role in the salary you are offered.

Keep in mind, many employers also conduct research to ensure their offer is competitive. Not all employers are open to negotiating with entry-level candidates.

If you choose to negotiate salary:

1. Do your research. Use the NACE Job Seekers Salary Calculator to determine what the range for competitive salary is for the specific geographic location and type of position. Consider whether the offer you've been extended falls within that range.
2. When you approach the employer, do so in a non-confrontational and professional manner. Discuss your concern with someone on the phone or in person. Email communication is not recommended, except as a follow-up or to confirm the conversation.

Example:

Student: First, I want to express my gratitude and excitement for the offer. (Company Name) is my first choice and I believe the position is a great fit for me. I am calling to see if this is a firm offer or if there is any room for negotiation.

Employer: What did you have in mind?

Student: The salary is a bit below what I was expecting. I researched the salary averages for (position title) in (location) and the offer is a bit lower than what I found for someone with my experience and education. Is there any possibility of considering a slightly higher salary?

**You will need to follow the employer's lead in this conversation; each negotiation is slightly different. If the employer indicates the offer is firm, do not try to negotiate.*

3. *Some employers are not open to negotiation. Be prepared for what you plan to do or say if the answer is "No."*
4. Keep in mind sometimes you can negotiate other parts of the offer such as vacation or relocation.

ACCEPTING AN OFFER

Once you decide to accept an offer, contact the employer by making a personal call. You also should confirm in writing – email is acceptable for most employers. Communicate your excitement, and be sure to get a copy of the formal offer in writing from them as well, if you do not already have one.

Example:

Dear (Name),

Thank you for the offer of (position name) at (company name). I would like to formally accept the position. I am looking forward to working at (company name). I am confident I will be an asset to the organization.

Per our phone conversation, I will start on (date) and my salary will be (number). Should you need to reach me before then, please feel free to contact me at (phone number).

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

ONCE YOU HAVE ACCEPTED AN OFFER:

- **Withdraw from all other searches and stop interviewing.** If you want to continue interviewing, you should not accept an offer. If you need additional time to make a decision, request an extension from the employer.
- Contact other organizations with which you have interviewed to withdraw from consideration.

Example:

Dear (Name),

Thank you for your consideration for the position of (title). I appreciate the time you spent meeting with me last week to discuss the position.

I wanted to let you know that I wish to withdraw my application at this time, as I have accepted a position at a different organization. Thank you again, and best wishes with your search.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

REJECTING AN OFFER

If you decide to decline an offer, communicate with the employer in a timely manner and in writing. Depending on the situation, you may also want to make a personal call prior to sending your email or letter.

Example:

Dear (Name),

I am writing in response to your offer of employment as (position title) at (company name). I appreciate your offer, as well as the time you took to interview me for the position. At this time, I have made the decision to accept another position, so I must respectfully decline your offer.

Thank you again for the opportunity and your consideration. Best wishes for continued success at (company).

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

References:

National Association of Colleges and Employers – www.nacweb.org.

For more information, visit the NDSU Career Center website at www.ndsu.edu/career/ or call 701-231-7111.

Services offered:

- Resume and cover letter critiques
 - Interview preparation
 - CAREERlink electronic job boards
- Cooperative education and internship programs
 - Career fairs
 - On-campus interviews
- Graduate school preparation
 - Career Spots, job search videos
 - Alumni services

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COMPARING OFFERS

Use this worksheet to compare job offers and assist you in your decision making process. You can use criteria 1-5 to establish your own set of requirements for evaluating offers by reflecting on your personal values, goals, skills and company/work culture preferences.

COMPANY			
POSITION TITLE			
LOCATION			
SALARY			
BENEFITS			
Health Insurance			
Life Insurance			
Other Insurance			
Vacation			
Sick Leave			
Additional Benefits (Include out-of-pocket costs, etc.)			
RETIREMENT PACKAGE			
CRITERIA 1: (Example: Prefer location in Minnesota or North Dakota.)			
CRITERIA 2:			
CRITERIA 3:			
CRITERIA 4:			
CRITERIA 5:			