

Negotiating with your Interviewer

You excelled in the interview,
you've been offered the job,
and now you're down to negotiating the deal...
But how do you make sure you secure the best deal for you?

A few tips:

- **Know your worth**
You may have an idea of what you are worth based on anecdotal information about what people like you are paid, but you will need something a little more scientific if you are to convince a future employer. Have a comparison list with you in the interview. Write out the requirements for the job, as listed in the advertisement. Add any extra skills you believe are important for the role. Then tick those items that you closely match. This gives you a physical list of your strengths as compared to the employer's needs, and a negotiation base.
- **Timing is important**
Think of the timing and importance of the things you want to negotiate, and acknowledge that some things are not negotiable. Pushing in the wrong direction will only cause friction, and may distract you from pursuing a more productive avenue. For example, don't ask for a car of a specific make or a house in a particular locality. You could be seen as over-confident or, worse, over-demanding.
- **Look at the whole package subjectively**
Some companies have their hands tied when it comes to salary, but may have a number of other benefits that will raise your overall remuneration to a figure that meets your expectations. Consider the tax benefits and liabilities of having a company car, for example, or the opportunity for flexible working or working from home, if this is important to you.
- **Work towards a win-win situation**
It is possible to be too good at negotiating. Squeezing every last penny out of your future employer will not get the relationship off on the best footing. Remember that you will most likely be working with the person you are negotiating your salary with, so keep things convivial, lest your working relationship does not match your salary. Be prepared to compromise. If you ask for six benefits and the company comes back with two, settle for three or four and everyone will win. It's important that the outcome of the negotiation is a win-win situation.
- **Know your limits**
Sometimes no amount of negotiation will get you what you want. If it does not meet your needs, it is time to stop rather than end up with the wrong deal. If not, then be upfront as soon as possible, so that the interviewer can consider you in an enhanced light or, alternatively, cut the process short to save time for all concerned.