

# Jobs – Negotiation & Analysis

## SALARY NEGOTIATION

**First analyze the offer: do you have all the info you need to make the decision?**

Before you negotiate, make sure you are justified in your actions. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do you have significant work experience or other qualities which should place you in the upper part of the salary range rather than in the lower or middle?
- How does the offer match up with other offers in a comparable context?
- Will it provide sufficiently to meet basic living needs and discretionary income for personal needs?
- Is it in-line with professional standards?
- To answer these questions, consult alumni, the career office, trade publications, salary survey, faculty, past employment postings to compare salaries, etc.

**If you are asking more than is offered – you must have a reason why!**

Determine if there are items which are more negotiable than others i.e. Start date, professional memberships, CEU opportunities, licensure, travel to professional conferences, early performance reviews, etc.

Be honest: If you have other offers, let them know. If you have non-career considerations, let them know. Keep them informed.

Determine your lowest and highest expectations. Ask for your high and settle for your medium.

**Only negotiate if you really want the job and are prepared to accept it if your needs are satisfied.**

### When the Wrong Job Offer Comes First

Always acknowledge the job offer and the timeline you have for acceptance.

- You don't have to give them an answer at the time they make you an offer. As a matter of fact, even if you want the job, it's a good idea to call them back with your answer. Write the offer down as you are speaking with them. Then thank them for the offer while acknowledging the salary and the start date to establish good rapport.
- Ask if there is someone you could speak with regarding questions about benefits or job particulars
- Always know you can call with additional questions about benefits, salary, working conditions, relocation resources, etc. It is unlikely that you would know what to ask during the time that they call so you may want to clip a script next to the phone.
- Find out the timeframe for making the decision.
- Thank them again and let them know when you will respond to the offer.
- If you are hoping for an offer from another company, now is the time to act!
- Tell them that you are considering another offer and that you have to respond within \_\_\_\_\_. Ask them for the timeline in which they are making their decision. Remember, every one involved in the job search process expects it to move faster than it actually does. So if someone tells you "We'll be deciding in a week" be realistic and expect at least 2-3 weeks.

# Jobs – The Offer

## RECOGNIZING A GENUINE JOB OFFER

### When an Offer is Not an Offer

A certain amount of misunderstanding can occur when an over-anxious applicant misinterprets what is no more than “feeling out” activity on the part of the prospective employer. For example, when an employer asks “Will you be willing to work irregular hours?” or “When would you be able to start.” Never let yourself believe that these types of statements mean that the job is yours until you receive a genuine offer.

**Misinterpreting Offers:** - may cause you to prematurely relax your job search.  
**Your job search is not over until you start the job.**

### Elements of a Genuine Job Offer:

A firm offer may be made verbally after a series of interviews or may be made in writing. The following are the elements of a firm job offer:

- A clear “we are offering you the job” statement
- Your position title and a definition of duties
- Identification of your immediate supervisor
- Starting salary
- A description of conditions of employment such as probation period, initial training program, employee benefits, travel time required, and so on
- The date and time to report for work

You can confirm an offer by requesting it in writing, or take the initiative by sending a confirmation/ acceptance letter to the employer, including the employment terms in the letter.

### **Offer Evaluation**

Establish a set of criteria by which to evaluate offers before you begin interviewing. This list of criteria would be based on past experience, current knowledge about the job market, faculty and peer input, and a personal definition of the type of job you are expecting. List should be personalized and genuine – an honest appraisal of the type of position you are looking for.

Create a one-page summary describing your preferred job upon graduation:

- How closely the offer resembles your goals upon entering the MSSW program
- The major responsibilities
- The organizational culture in which one is the most effective (environment, values, or mission, appearance, size, people, office and work styles)
- The level of supervisory responsibilities desired
- Preferred location and travel requirements
- Preferred salary, benefits, feedback & reward system
- Type of job assignments available for first year
- Relation of job to past experience and knowledge (how well the job capitalizes on your previous background)
- Degree of autonomy/teamwork sought
- Upside potential and downside risks
- Preferred hours to be devoted to job

# Jobs – Negotiation & Analysis

## **5 Keys to Salary Negotiation:**

- Employers don't usually tell you the most they are willing to pay
- Never discuss salary until the end of the interview process
- Never be the first to discuss salary
- Do your homework before the interview on how much you'll need
- Do salary research before you go into the interview

## **JOB OFFER ANALYSIS**

### **Personal factors**

- Job Title
- Promotion possibilities
- Function responsibilities
- Decision-Making Authority
- Opportunity for Growth
- Management style
- Location
- Commuting situation
- Travel requirements
- Vacation plan
- My ability to do the job
- Other

### **Agency organization factors**

- Area of practice
- Type of Agency (for profits, non profits, government agencies, etc.)
- Prospects for growth
- Other

### **Compensation**

- Salary
- Relocation provisions
- Financial benefits
- Compensatory time

### **Bonus benefits**

- Insurance: medical, dental, disability; pension
- Perks
- Cell phone, laptop, pager
- CEU opportunities, licensure examination reimbursement, professional development opportunity

## In Closing

As you kick off your job search, we hope you will have found this handbook helpful. While this handbook provides you with the basic tools you will need to begin your journey, there are a few other items you may need to make your job search even more effective.

**Social Work Licensing:** As you complete your social work bachelors or masters degree you will be eligible to take the social work licensing examination. Many social work jobs require that you be licensed within the first few weeks of employment. You can find information about licensure and the forms you need to apply for the exam at the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners website:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/default.shtm>

**Social Work Career Development – A Handbook for Job Hunting and Career Planning**, second edition by Carol Nesslein Doelling. This book is available through NASW Press <http://www.naswpress.org/> and is one of the most valuable resources for providing resource information on virtually all areas of career advancement for social workers.

### Additional Job Search Resources:

**NASW Joblink** – The national NASW Career Center and job database for social workers  
<http://www.socialworkers.org/joblinks/>

**Social Work and Social Service Jobs Online**, national job database sponsored by the Career Services Office at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University.

<http://gwbweb.wustl.edu/jobs/>

**Social Work Job Bank** – a service of *The New Social Worker Magazine*. This online career center features real social work jobs at all professional levels, in a variety of settings, and in locations around the world—as well as articles and resources relating to careers in the profession of social work.

<http://www.socialworkjobbank.com/>

Good luck with your social work job search!

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