

# Job Offer Evaluation FAQ's

## Q: What if they request salary information during the application process?

A: Generally, when salary information is requested in the cover letter and/or application your options are to:

1. Respond with a researched range
2. Ignore the request
3. Explain you'd be happy to discuss salary once you have a detailed sense of what the job entails; or
4. Indicate that your salary requirements are negotiable and flexible (but do this only if you are, indeed, flexible).\*\*Be aware that there is another school of thought that says ignoring an explicit request for salary information is risky
5. Salary is best discussed only when an employer is ready to make you an offer, and salary should be viewed in the context of a host of issues related to employment.

## Q: What do I say if asked for my salary requirements in the interview (or before the organization makes a formal offer)?

A: The rule of thumb is that you want the company to mention a salary amount first. You want to avoid discussing your specific requirements until a formal offer has been made.

- If you are asked about salary, reply with: "If it's okay with you, I'd like to set that question aside for now and focus on the content of the work. I'm interested in knowing more about the specific duties and responsibilities of the job."
- If the hiring manager insists, you might say something like, "I assume a range has been established for this position and wonder what the organization had in mind?" or, share the range you identified through research you have already done! Just make sure it is reasonable and researched. Keep in mind that your tone of voice and body language can make a big difference. You should be affable, non-threatening, and friendly.

## Q: What do I do if all my requests are rejected in the negotiation process?

A: Your decision to accept or reject the offer must then be based on the original offer.

## Q: How committed am I to a job offer I have accepted, if a better offer comes along?

A: Several options here

1. If you are unsure about accepting a job offer, it is better to negotiate for more time to make your decision than to accept the offer prematurely and later rescind your acceptance.
2. It is important to honor your commitment once you've made it; backing out of the agreement is highly unprofessional and might later reflect negatively on you in your chosen field.
3. Another consideration should be the job offer contract. If you were given a signing bonus, examine the contract for clauses that state you must pay back the full signing bonus if you leave the organization before the stated duration. The signing bonus amount that you receive will be the total amount, minus taxes, but the amount you must repay will be the full amount of the bonus.

## Q: How do I request an offer in writing?

A: If a verbal offer is made, a response could be, "I'm very excited about the opportunity to work for you and this organization. Since this is such a significant decision for both of us, I'd be more comfortable if the offer was formalized in writing and I could look it over."

## Q: What if I don't understand something on the employment offer letter?

A: Companies are usually happy to clarify or answer any questions about the job offer. Students may also seek legal advice regarding binding job offers or other professional commitments. La Follette staff/faculty may also be able to help (though they are not legal experts!).

## Q: How do I go about delaying response on a job offer?

A: Make sure you have a concrete reason for asking for an extension. Are you waiting to hear from another employer about an offer, or are you just hoping to get more interviews? Don't wait until the last minute to ask for an extension; this looks like you don't think ahead and may indicate that you might behave the same way on the

job. Be tactful and diplomatic in your wording. You may need to explain your reasons to the employer. For example, if you have an upcoming, previously scheduled interview with another employer, you may explain that it is important to you to keep your commitment to the other employer, and that in order to make the best decision; you need to attend the other interview. For the sake of speed, call the employer to discuss the situation. For the record, you should follow up with an email to confirm your request.

**Q: After accepting a job offer, are there any other ethical obligations?**

A: Accepting a job offer ethically obligates you to cease job search efforts and to notify other prospective employers as soon as possible that you must withdraw your name from their consideration. As soon as your decision is made, promptly notify employers with a courteous phone call. Make every effort to speak to your contact in person rather than leaving a voice mail message for this purpose. Failing to notify employers that you are withdrawing from the job search is discourteous, and potentially dishonest. It essentially leaves the employer believing that you are still interested in the job. After you have spoken, follow up with a written confirmation by email.

**One last thing...If a position is acceptable to you as it is offered, don't feel like you must negotiate! In the final analysis, a job seeker's "gut feeling" will often be the deciding factor in determining the acceptance of a valid job offer!**

## Let's Talk Money

### Comprehensive Salary Data Resources

We know it's not all about the cash, but it's a good idea to make sure your expectations are realistic. These resources can help with that. They can also help you determine your worth and whether your offer is a good fit for your lifestyle and needs.

- [Glass Door](#)
- [The Riley Guide](#)
- [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)
- [Non-Profit Salary](#)
- [Federal Salaries](#) (by location)

### Cost of Living Calculators

As much as we want everyone to stay in Wisconsin and never leave, we know that's not always the case (though we hope you come back and visit... or forever). Use these calculators to determine what your salary means in your new city.

- [How far will my salary go in another city?](#) (CNN Money)
- [Cost of Living Calculator](#) (Bankrate – also by city/metro area)
- [Cost of Living Wizard](#) (Salary.com – includes searches by job title)
- [Cost of Living Calculator](#) (PayScale)
- [Compare Cost of Living](#) (Sperling)

### Fun Quizzes

- [Where should I live?](#) (US)
- [Where should I live?](#) (international)