



# Salary Negotiation Scripts for Any Role

by Natalie Fisher | April 04, 2018

Money is an uncomfortable topic, which is why most people don't even try to negotiate their starting salary. But when you go into an interview, there is no getting around the fact that you'll likely have to talk money at some point.

You know there's a good chance that they'll ask you something like, "What are your salary expectations?" or "What did you make in your previous position?" Maybe you've frozen before when they've asked, or maybe you've blanked and had no idea what to say. It can be really nerve-wracking, because what is the "right" answer to that question?

Or maybe you've come right out and told them how much you used to make in your previous role, completely blowing your chances of negotiating a number that's much higher than that, even if the role you're currently discussing is truly worthy of a lot more.

The truth is that the salary negotiation process is complicated. I've broken it down here in this post into a simple framework (with a script for each one) so that you can be as prepared as possible when you find yourself in it. There are many ways to handle it, and each case will be different depending on the hiring manager, the organization, and other differentiating factors. However, there are some basic steps to give you a good idea of what to expect when you're going through this process.

Deciding to have this conversation before you accept an offer means that:

- 1) You are a lot more likely to negotiate a higher salary when you're first starting a new job (during the process) than once you're already in the job.
- 2) The average raise is only 2% to 5%.
- 3) When people negotiate a higher starting salary successfully, the average candidate gets more than they expected.

## STEP 1. Research

The first thing you absolutely NEED to do before you even go to an interview is to do your research first and know your numbers around the roles for which you're applying. You can be asked about money at any time, so it's crucial for your success to know your numbers before you get into any situation that may require you to speak about salary confidently.

## STEP 2. "What are your salary expectations?"

This question is normally asked before they are serious about hiring you, just to feel you out. There isn't any point in discussing or getting into the numbers at this time because they haven't committed to hiring you yet, and they have not made you an offer, so you ideally want to defer this question and hang out in the world of 'being negotiable' until you have a job offer on the table.

### Example script:

"My first priority is finding the right fit; however, I am negotiable depending on what your budget for the position is."

## STEP 3. Negotiating after you have the job offer in hand

Once you have the job offer in hand, you know they are serious and committed to the idea of hiring you. This is when you will want to make your move.

One thing you don't want to forget when you have this conversation is that it's very important that you sound genuinely excited about and grateful for the opportunity before you get to the point of asking for above what they've offered you. The key is to approach the conversation with the frame of being excited to start providing value and working with them, AND.... you just want to iron out the details and work out the best offer that's fair for both of you.

With that said, here's an example script that you can use:





**Example script:**

"I'm very excited about this opportunity, and this *is* the place that I want to be, so I'm really excited about this offer! Based on my research, this role at other companies is in the range of about \$\_\_\_\_\_ - \$\_\_\_\_\_. While what you're offering is respectable, with the value that I'll be providing, I'd like to discuss if there's anything that we could do to bring me closer to \$\_\_\_\_\_."

Once you've got the job offer, they are confident in you. They know you'll be providing value, or they wouldn't be offering you the job. They chose you! The above script works because they're attached to the idea of hiring you. They have invested time and resources into making the decision that YOU are the right fit.

Salary negotiation is complex mainly because there are many other things that you can be missing out on too if you don't ask about them, and the way you do this is you bring them up, (again) with an excited energy to be a part of the company and contribute in the role, but wanting to work out what's fair for both of you.

**STEP 4. Negotiation scripts for extra benefits beyond money:**

For example, if they aren't able to be as flexible on the salary that you would have hoped, it doesn't need to end there. You can ask them for other things that (quite often from my experience) are a lot easier for them to say yes to, and will bring you great value in the role and in your quality of life, like extra vacation time or stock options, and in some cases, a company phone, an expense account, or a car allowance.

**Example script:**

"Thank you! I really look forward to working with you, I have a question about my offer. I was wondering if you have any flexibility around vacation time. Is that something you'd be open to discussing?"

This opens up the conversation for them to say, "What did you have in mind?" and then they can give you an easy, "Sure" or, "I'll check."

I know that this makes most of us feel uncomfortable, and that's exactly why most people don't do it.

Here are some facts:

- "No" is the default response to most salary negotiations, and this shuts down 50% of people who attempt it.
- If you don't ask, the answer will always be no.
- Those who don't negotiate lose out on \$500,000 of potential income in their lives (That adds up to \$16,000/year lost over the next 30 years of your life) - Source Fast Company.
- 25% of those who negotiate get MORE than they expected - Source PayScale
- Only 15% of people who try get nothing - Source PayScale.

On a final note, the goal of the negotiation is for the hiring manager to think to himself, "Well she drove a hard bargain, but we're happy we were able to get her on our team."

We want them genuinely feeling happy about being victorious in hiring you. The feelings in the salary negotiation can easily go sour if the candidate approaches it in the wrong way. That's why it's so important to be genuinely excited and grateful for the offer before you ask for above what they've offered. From personal experience, that's the biggest key to getting what you want and having both sides be happy about it.

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