

# 10 TIPS FOR NEGOTIATING AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT



- 1. Do your research.** Look into the company/union, the realities of the position, compensation package, professional development support, and other information that is important to your negotiations. Ensure you understand how the position would normally be compensated; if possible, identify what aspects of the compensation package may be open to negotiation.
- 2. Know what you need.** If the job won't pay your bills, has hours that don't work with your daycare, or is in a region you can't travel to, then move on. Don't waste time negotiating for a job that you can't, or won't, actually take.
- 3. Present your case clearly.** Whenever possible, let the employer make the first offer. However, ensure you are ready to negotiate. When presenting your requests, offer a clear and concise rationale with supporting evidence from your research or experience.
- 4. Know what's in their power to give.** In some instances the wage and benefits might be firm, with no room to negotiate. However, many other items may be negotiable including fitness memberships, flextime, and professional development allowance. Only spend time negotiating what can actually be negotiated.
- 5. Be reasonable.** One of the best ways to stop negotiations before they start is by asking for something that is unreasonable given the position, industry, and/or your skills and experience. If no one else in that job, anywhere, has a company car – don't ask for one.
- 6. Establish a walk away point.** Although it is important to be flexible and reasonable, you also need to establish your bottom line. What are your "must haves" – those things on which you won't take no for an answer.
- 7. Get it in writing.** If at all possible, get the offer in writing. Compare it against your list of needs and wants and the research you've done. Don't expect something formal; a quick email would be sufficient for your review.
- 8. Take your time.** One of the top negotiation [mistakes](#) is accepting/declining an offer too quickly. It's best to accept an offer with a clear head. Be sure to specify how much time you'd need (e.g., a few days) and stick to that. Too much time and the employer may just move onto the next individual.
- 9. Know when not to negotiate.** Just like you can't "haggle" prices in a chain store, in some instances negotiation isn't appropriate. Some employers may simply not negotiate. If there is no room for more talk, sometimes it's best to either accept what's offered or walk away.
- 10. Ensure it is a "win-win" arrangement.** Negotiation is about give and take, not about winning. Both parties should feel they've contributed to the agreement, not simply succumbed to pressure.



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