



## Negotiating an Offer.

So you have now successfully navigated through the interview process and are about to be made an offer.

This is now critical to your ultimate success . Now is the time to revisit the criteria you established at the beginning of your search.

How many of these points can you tick off your list. What points are still not addressed and how critical are they to accepting the opportunity?

What issues are you prepared to concede?

During the interview process you will probably not have spent much time discussing terms and conditions.

This is a delicate stage during negotiations as the employer has now disclosed a serious interest in hiring you.

The danger here is for the candidate to try and leverage this advantage.

Usually, this transpires by the indication that you are considering other offers or potential opportunities. This is natural and expected; however, what tends to happen is that the candidate exaggerates these options.

At this stage you need to step back and consider the reality and psychology of the offer process.

It's unrealistic to be considering 4 or more options as this conveys a lack of focus. Most top candidates will have reduced this to the top two offers/opportunities. Trying to manage and keep alive 4 or more opportunities is fraught with problems. Timing being the major concern.

Now is the time to stand back and seriously evaluate your options and drop those that do not feature in your top two.

Think about the signals you are providing your future employer - are they positive or negative.

Bear in mind that the employer is looking for you to accept their opportunity because of the challenge and opportunity they will provide.

Some points to consider:

Does the opportunity provide the challenge and opportunity you are seeking?

Will this be a step up and offer career growth?

What sort of opportunity for training and further development is provided?

How do they treat and mentor top talent?

What sort of remuneration package is provided?

JFK once said "Think not of what your country can do for you but rather what you can do for your country".

Now replace "country" with "employer" and reflect on the statement. Too often candidates take a short term approach and try to push the employer hard on the remuneration package at this stage.

If you do so you must be able to deliver results. Remember your previous employer may have rated you as a high performer. You had maybe worked for the company for 5 to 7 years and were comfortable with the organisation and had built up your knowledge and experience.

Joining your new employer means that you start from scratch and have to prove yourself all over again. Many employers are reluctant to pay top dollar early in the negotiation because you are untested in their environment.

I am therefore advocating some pragmatism during salary negotiations.

I believe that if you perform well in the role you will be recognised and rewarded accordingly.

The converse is not a good win- win scenario where you gain an excellent salary package but you fail to deliver.

Pushing too hard at this stage can cause issues during the negotiation process.

Think of it similar to when a company buys another company. Usually they agree a price, and then there is an earn out portion based upon a time period and performance during this period.

Negotiation is about trust, understanding and an agreement that benefits both parties. Therefore honesty and openness play an important part.

By pushing too hard for a higher salary package you may be indicating to the employer that you consider this to be a transactional rather than a longer term relationship.

Recently I had a contractor who was finding the going tough and decided to try for a permanent test analyst position with a leading service provider in this field. The employer made a good offer however because the candidate played the field and he tried to counter offer to increase his salary level. The candidate also indicated that he was considering a contract opportunity again confusing the employer about his motivations.

The result was he lost both opportunities.

From the employer's perspective the candidate raised issues in the employer's mind about commitment and fit to the organisation. There was a level of trust that had been broken.

When accepting a permanent offer you are usually allowed 5 working days to make a decision. For contract this tends to reduce to 1 or 2 days.

My advice is to make a quick decision as this sends the best signal to the employer.

It is always worthwhile getting some professional advice around the offer conditions.

Good luck.

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