



National Society for Histotechnology
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Salary Negotiations...The Dance Begins



Tips From a Histology Recruiter

Salary negotiation is a sensitive topic for both the employer and the job seeker. For example, say the pay range for a given position is \$20-30 per hour. Most job seekers are hearing the job pays \$30 per hour and the employer is thinking we are paying \$20 per hour. So the dance begins.

How do you, as a job seeker, handle the question: So what are your salary expectations? It is not as tricky as you would think. Here is some simple straightforward advice to help you get a great offer.

Analyze Your Current Situation:

1. Are you being paid a fair wage?
2. Are you being under paid?
3. Are you getting a really good salary, aka better than people doing a similar job with similar credentials and experience living in your area?

Do your research so you know where you stand. Use a salary analyzer to determine how your compensation lines up with others in your profession, in the area your new job would be located in. You can google salary comparison or cost of living calculator. A good one can be found at www.salary.com.

Now you know where you stand compared to your peers. Generally speaking, unless you are getting paid a better than average wage, you can expect about a 5-10% raise in your base salary relative to the cost of living in the area.

**If salary is only one of the factors driving your job change then once you have this knowledge you have an approximate number.

i.e. from the original example:

Say you are making \$20 per hour in your current position and that is average for the area. It would be fair to expect a 5-10% raise. AKA \$21-24 per hour. Most larger organizations have a compensation analyst on staff that uses a formula to calculate your offer. They consider the



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same factors I have given you. So what you want to say when asked about compensation is “I am really interested in the opportunity, I have done some research and based on my current compensation I am looking at a range of \$21-24 per hour. Of course, money is not the only factor I consider, so I am interested in hearing your offer.”

Say you are making \$20 per hour in an area that has a lower than average cost of living and you are moving to an area where the cost of living is 50% higher. The salary range should be close to 50% higher or \$30-45 per hour. It would be fair to expect a cost of living adjustment to \$30 per hour plus the salary increase of 5%-10% would put your pay range at \$31.50-33 per hour.

“I am really interested in the opportunity, I have done some research and based on my current compensation, and adjustments for cost of living in this area, I am looking at a range of \$31.50-33 per hour. Of course, money is not the only factor I consider, so I am interested in hearing your offer.”

***I emphatically discourage making a job change solely for money. In 25 plus years as a recruiter I can tell you that most people who are changing jobs solely for money often find out that the money wasn't the only thing driving the decision to make a job change and by making the job change solely for money they have found themselves out of the frying pan and in the fire; Making more money but still unsatisfied with their job situation.*

There are a myriad of other reasons to make a job change and I will address them in future posts. For the purposes of this article here is a partial list:

- *Schedule –hours/shift*
- *Benefits*
- *Opportunity for Advancement*
- *Quality of living in the area*
- *Actual duties of the new position*

If you are the exception and have determined that you are only making a job change for the money, do your cost of living calculation and determine the dollar amount that would make it worth your while and tell them:



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“I am really interested in the opportunity, I have done some research and based on my current compensation, I need a pay rate of 65K and I am interested in hearing your best offer.”

The moral of the story is that there are no smoke and mirrors to salary negotiation. Research and open communication are the keys to getting a great offer the next time you are interviewing for a job.

Have a question for Pam? Email her at relia1@earthlink.net to see your question answered in the next career newsletter!