

Write a Follow-Up Letter

Directions: Use the samples in this chapter to help you formulate a professional thank-you letter. Create it in a Word document using the business letter format (the same format you used for your cover letter). The follow-up letter should consist of three short paragraphs, single spaced with no indents, and an extra space between the paragraphs. Make sure you include your contact information as you did for the cover letter.

The first paragraph begins by thanking them for the interview. You can also use verbiage such as *"I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to meet with you and discuss the XYZ position."* Mention something specific you learned from visiting with them about the job or company.

The second paragraph is where you communicate that you are ready to begin working for the company and provide a *new example* of how you are a great fit for the job.

In the final paragraph, again thank them for the interview. Assure them of your continued interest in working for them in this position. You can mention that you *"look forward to hearing from them"* or *"look forward to the next step."*

Use a formal closing such as *Sincerely* or *Respectfully*, and sign your name with your typed signature beneath it.

✓ SELF-CHECK

1. Describe the two-step follow-up procedure.
2. Why are two thank-you notes better than one?
3. Should you still send a thank you even if you are not hired? Why or why not?

» LO 8-2 Applying the Art of Successful Negotiation

Occasionally, toward the end of an interview, the hiring manager will say something that sounds like they want you. If you are fortunate, it will be obvious and sound something like this: *"We would like to make you an offer."* Or, it may be subtle like this: *"What would it take for us to get you to work for us?"* Be alert for these types of cues that the negotiation process has begun. If you get the less obvious cue posed in the second scenario, make sure you follow this with a question to clarify that they are actually making you an offer, not just seeing what you want for salary. If they are not actually offering you the job, you are not negotiating. You are still selling yourself to them, so answer

Are you making me an offer?

that you are *open* or *negotiable*. If hiring managers affirm that they are indeed offering you the job, then the negotiation process has begun. The following are examples of what you say next, after each negotiation cue:

Hiring manager: *We would like to make you an offer.*

Job candidate: *That is great, as I am ready to consider your very best offer.*

Or

Hiring manager: *What would it take for us to get you to work for us?*

Job candidate: *Are you offering me this position?*

Hiring manager: *That is correct; we want you to work for us.*

Job candidate: *Terrific! Thank you. I am ready to consider your very best offer.*

In the second dialog, do you see how the candidate deferred the discussion on salary back to the hiring manager? Do that. Allow this person to offer you a salary amount for the position. You want the hiring manager to state the price. Remember, whoever brings up an exact money amount first is at a disadvantage.

In negotiating, it's always far better to let the other person talk first. When you get to listen first, you ALWAYS have the advantage. You know exactly what the other person wants . . . and knowledge is influence and power.

—Christian Carter

The initial offer to you is just that, the beginning. Even if you are told it is a firm offer, very few times is it. The government and military are places where offers are often fixed; the corporate world has wiggle room in negotiating salary and/or benefits.

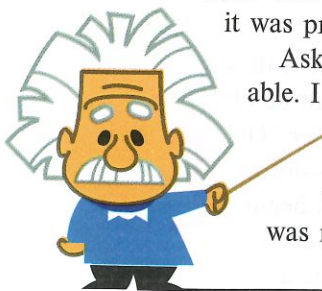
If you do not get an offer in the interview, you may get it in the follow-up phone call or even in a letter. Again, the above dialog works. Thank the hiring manager, and say that you are prepared to consider (not accept) the best offer.

careercoach8.2

Breathing Room: Ask for Time to Make Your Decision

Now that you have a solid job offer with a salary amount attached to it, you want to do two things. First, thank them sincerely for the offer and let them know you are enthusiastic about the position. You do this even if the offer is too low. Second, you ask for time. You ask for 24 hours or a short block of time to consider the offer. You want to do this even if the offer is perfect. During the 24 hours you will consider all aspects of your situation and the offer. You will then be in a solid frame of mind to either accept the offer as it was presented to you or to counter the offer.

Asking for time also lets the employer know you are serious and valuable. I know of one candidate who asked for 24 hours and, while waiting for the candidate to accept the position and proposed salary, the manager actually called her back with a better offer. They did not want to lose her and they thought the delay in response meant she was not going to accept.



Key Negotiation Questions to Ask

Once you have been offered the job, but before you accept, you are in the position to gather more information. Consider asking some of the following questions to help you evaluate the job offer:

- When would you like me to start?
- How and when will my performance be reviewed?
- What are the promotion opportunities with this position?
- What are the benefits added to the position in terms of vacation, insurance, and other perks?
- Is there mileage reimbursement for commuters or parking benefits?

The following student story exemplifies the importance of evaluating and negotiating in order to ensure that the position fully fits your goals, as well as your needs.

I have a nightmare story about an interview that I hope will help others. Sometimes we are so scared that we won't get a good job that we don't do our homework and end up accepting a job only to be miserable from day one.

I had an interview with a company to be the director of training. I "nailed" the interview and knew I got the job as soon as I walked out. The president of the company asked what I needed in order to get started and I told him: I need a computer, someone to answer the phone when I am out, and a copier. Later, I will need a computer lab.

When I showed up the first day of work, my "computer" was one I shared with another employee and it was also the Internet server for their ISP business. The "someone to answer the phones" was a \$10 answering machine, and my copier was Kinkos. It went downhill from there.

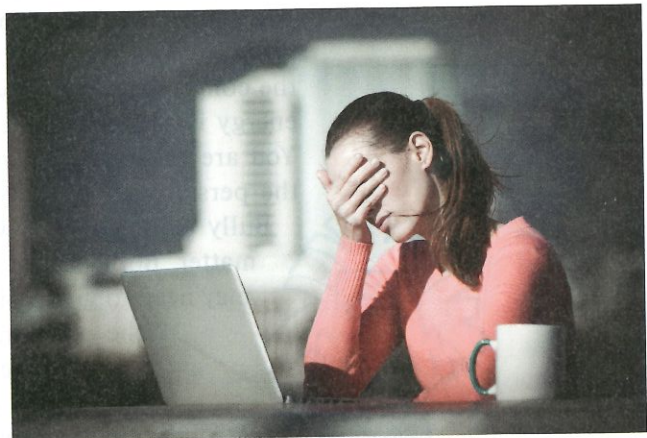
I stuck it out for six months before resigning, but I learned from that point on to interview the company while they are interviewing me and to ask questions when offered the job. Just as I need to prove that I am a good fit for them, they need to show me that likewise they are a good fit for me. Make sure that it will be a good place for you to work.

Nothing is worse than getting a job and realizing that you soon need to go on another job hunt because you hate your job.

Courtesy of Saundra Johnson.

How could this student have made sure there would be an opportunity for evaluation and negotiation after starting her job? What questions could she have asked before accepting and after beginning her job?

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Remember to ask for time to consider any offer you receive. How much time is typically acceptable to take to consider?

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Do you have any plans you can't put off?

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Other Questions to Consider

Ask if there is anything you can do before you begin working to get a head start in your job, such as reading recommended material or participating in any meetings. If you have an upcoming event you need to attend, such as a wedding or scheduled vacation that cannot be postponed, you will want to broach this topic with them before you accept the offer. You can ask, *"Before this position became available, my husband and I planned and purchased a trip to Hawaii to celebrate our anniversary. I would like to take this vacation. Would there be a way for me to do this even though you do not offer annual leave for six months?"*

careercoach8.3

Negotiate for a "Win-Win" Agreement

When you negotiate your job, come from a place of having and getting what you want, not from a place of scarcity. Think *win-win*, not *me versus the company*. You want the company to prosper and you want to add value to the company. In return you want to be rewarded for your efforts. When your energy is added to the company's, all prosper. Win-win negotiation works. You are building relationships. After all, you will be working with, or for, the person with whom you are negotiating the terms of your employment.

Bully tactics do not work in job negotiation, or in much of life for that matter. Both parties want to walk away feeling they have an edge. You may need to give a bit in order to get what you want. As you contemplate the position, think about your short-term and long-term goals and how well the job meets your vision. Research and preparation will help you determine if the position is a good fit for you (Jandt, 1999; Covey, 2014).



Nonnegotiables The few items you must have in order to take the job.

Nonnegotiables

Make sure you have your nonnegotiable items in mind. **Nonnegotiables** are the few items you must have in order to take the job. For example, if you need to be able to flex your lunch hour to pick up your child after school, then having that particular need met might outweigh the need to negotiate other benefits. These two or three nonnegotiable items become your line in the sand; you are saying that if the employer can't work with you on them, you are willing to walk away from the offer. If you have more than two or three, then you may be walking away from some decent offers. You can have many

“wants” on your ideal job list, but you want to narrow your list down to a few things you absolutely must have.

Cyber Trip 8.2

Job Negotiation Advice on the Internet Use your favorite search engine and the keywords “job negotiation advice,” “win-win job negotiations,” or “successful job negotiation” to find two or three tips on job negotiation that will be helpful for you. In addition, visit <http://jobstar.org/tools/salary/negotrtrt.php> to read more useful negotiation advice.

exercise 8.1

Your Nonnegotiables

The work you did in the first few chapters had you prioritize your ideal job and what you value in the workplace. You also drafted your career mission statement. This is a good foundation for this exercise and for negotiating.

Directions

First, list as many things as you can think of in five minutes that you want in your ideal job. Do not censor yourself; however, do stop after five minutes.

Your Negotiable List		

Next, circle only *two or three* items that you must have. These are *nonnegotiable* for you in any position you would consider and the items may change over time. For example, if you have small children, flexible hours might top your list today, but as your children get older that need might change.



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Listening as a Negotiation Tool

Listening is a key to winning in negotiation. Listen for cues of what the company representative really can offer you. Listen for phrases that might mean they can go higher. For example, *"We are offering you just about the best terms we have for someone with your experience."*



You can also ask questions to find out if they support your goals. For example, if one of your goals is to be reimbursed for mileage but mileage reimbursement is not in their budget, you can ask, *"Would you support taking steps to budget for mileage reimbursement?"* If the answer is yes, you might be able to negotiate for the following year's mileage reimbursement assuming you agree to work for the remainder of the current fiscal year without this perk.

» LO 8-3 Making a Sound Career Decision

Nearly everything is negotiable in a job offer. It is much like buying a house. You can ask for anything. You may not get it, but you can ask. Once you accept a job offer, it is very difficult to renegotiate. A Society for Human Resource Management survey found that 8 of 10 bosses were willing to negotiate salary and benefits with job applicants. Yet only 33 percent of applicants surveyed said they felt comfortable negotiating (salary.com). Be sure you are part of that 33 percent.

A survey of 875 hiring managers found that about 60 percent leave some wiggle room when they extend an initial pay offer, while just 30 percent say their first offer is final. For the other 10 percent, it depends on the candidate: For the right person, hiring managers will up the ante.

About 1 in 10 hiring managers said they actually think less of a candidate who doesn't try to nudge the numbers up a little. When asked what was most likely to persuade them to sweeten their offer, the largest group (34%) said they want to hear you explain why you're worth more by highlighting specific accomplishments. (CareerBuilder.com)

As you make your decision, you want to know what you are really being offered so you can negotiate what is most important to you. Here are some of the items that you can negotiate:

- Base salary
- Responsibilities
- Vacation time
- Insurance paid
- Signing bonuses
- Yearly bonuses
- Promised reviews with salary increases
- Office assistant
- Stock options/profit sharing

- 401(k) matched contribution level
- Relocation expenses
- Mileage reimbursement
- Toll fees paid
- Tuition reimbursement
- Day care paid for or supplemented
- Parking space and parking fees
- Flexible schedule (especially if you have children you need to take to school or pick up)
- Option to telecommute on certain days or when needed
- Time off for travel days (if you are traveling for work over a weekend you would have two extra days off)
- Company car
- Title
- Office space
- Equipment you need to work on the road or at home, such as a laptop
- Equipment fees
- Uniform allowance
- How shift work is assigned
- Home Internet (especially if you are expected to put in overtime from home or telecommute)
- Employment for your spouse



Find out what your work environment could be as part of your negotiable list.

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All of the items mentioned have a price to them and do add value to the total package. After looking at this list, you might want to add some more items to your negotiable list. For entry-level positions, stick to the basics. After you have more information regarding the position, you are ready to weigh the package and make a decision.

Cyber Trip 8.3

Additional Research on the Company For statistics on pay and benefits, visit the website of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a division of the U.S. Department of Labor, at <http://www.bls.gov/bls/wages.htm>. There you will be able to find the standard of pay for your field. While you may want to ask for the moon, you also want to keep your requests reasonable. This is another time when knowing what the position is worth will help you negotiate.

Negotiation Student Success Story

The following example shows how one student achieved her desired salary by following the proper steps and asking her prospective employer the right questions.

Student's Inquiry:

Hi Professor!

The interview on Monday went great and today they offered me the job! The only problem is that they're only offering \$48,000/yr and I was making \$55,200 at my previous job. That's quite a pay cut! It does cost a bit less to live in the Carolinas than it did in south Florida, but still it would be difficult to live on that salary. The job itself seems great though and would teach me a lot in my field. Is there a good way to let them know I'm interested in taking a job but need more money?

Thank you for any advice you can give me!!

—Sandy

Professor's Response:

Hi Sandy,

Did you go to www.salary.com, <http://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>, and other helpful websites to research what the average earnings are for this position? You can find the range.

When you call them back, ask if there is any wiggle room in their offer, as it is quite a bit lower than you are currently making. If they ask you what you were expecting, you can state you want to make a lateral move, or if you had to take a slight pay cut that the benefits and/or time off would at least offset the difference.

Since they will probably ask you to define lateral move, be prepared to give a number. Only you have the answer. Use the information you find on [salary.com](http://www.salary.com).

If you would accept the position at \$50K, then indicate a range of \$50K to \$60K depending upon benefits and time off. Explain that those two factors play into that range. This tells the HR manager that \$50K is what you are seeking for a base salary without benefits.

Do not talk about your need for the money. Rather, emphasize your education and experience, what the job is worth in the area, potential for growth, etc. They don't care about your need for cash, but they might pay more if you are worth more.

Keep me posted,

—Dr. Kari

Student's Result:

Professor:

It worked!!! He offered me \$53K plus a full benefit package which I accepted. First he emailed me a copy of the original offer. I had some small questions, such as what the shift hours were, how often employees get paid, etc., so I emailed him back with those questions and then I asked the following:

"And my final question is regarding the starting salary. Is there any wiggle room in that offer? I was making \$55,200 at my previous job, and while I'm not necessarily looking for a lateral move, I was not expecting such a large pay cut.

I look forward to your answers so that I can make a decision."

He emailed me back saying he would call me in the morning to discuss. Then he called me around 11:30 today and answered all of my questions, one at a time. When we got to the salary question, he said that he had budgeted between \$43,000 and \$55,000 for the position (like it said in the ad), but that he couldn't offer me the full amount because my programming skills are not very strong at this point. I agreed with him on that point and he said he could come up to \$53K and I said that would work for me. He also made sure I knew that he offers increases and bonuses on a regular basis, so I have a feeling that my salary will increase to a more comfortable level before too long.

I plan to start next Wednesday! Thanks again so much for the advice! It really helped!

—Sandy

Systematically Weigh the Alternatives

An easy method to evaluate the job offer is make a line down the middle of a sheet of paper. On one side list all of the advantages or reasons you would take the job and on the other list all of the disadvantages.

The student in the example above could have also used the 70/30 rule to evaluate whether or not the offer fit her needs. The **70/30 rule** states that if the job offer has 70 percent of what you desire (advantages) and less than 30 percent of what you don't want (disadvantages), then you may be in the ballpark for accepting. Please see Career Coach 8.5 for further information on the 70/30 rule.

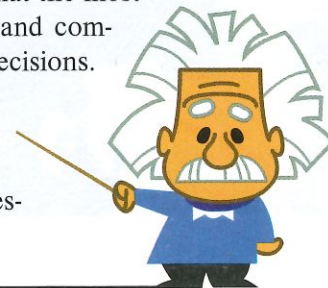
70/30 rule If the job offer has 70 percent of what you desire (advantages) and less than 30 percent of what you don't want (disadvantages), then you may be in the ballpark for accepting.

careercoach8.5

The 70/30 Rule

The 70/30 rule states that if the job offer has 70 percent of what you desire (advantages) and less than 30 percent of what you don't want (disadvantages), then you may be in the ballpark for accepting. This also assumes that the most crucial factors, or *nonnegotiables*, are in the offer, such as salary and commute time. This success tool can be helpful when making career decisions. You can also use the 70/30 rule to see if you need to ask for something specific to make the offer work.

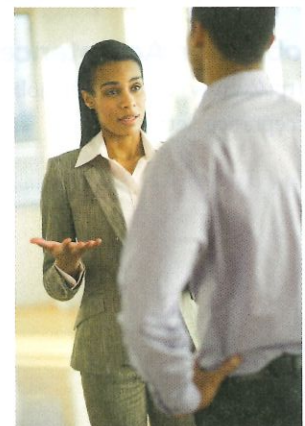
Another 70/30 rule in job negotiation is to listen 70 percent of the time and speak 30 percent of the time. Ask open-ended questions when you are negotiating and let the hiring manager speak.



How to Diplomatically Ask for What You Want

Words are very powerful, and the ones you choose in negotiating make a difference. Consider these sentences: *"I want the job, but I would need more money"* and *"I am very interested in this position and working for you, and I am wondering, is there is any wiggle room in your offer for the salary amount?"* or *"I am very interested in the position and I am wondering, is there is any room for negotiation in the salary?"* The first sentence is demanding, while the next two are more flexible and open for negotiation. The rule of thumb is to ask for more than what you are willing to settle for and negotiate for what you want. You do this from the employer's perspective. Explain how your skills and experiences are worth more. You also use the information from the research you have done regarding what the job is worth in that region.

If they cannot meet your negotiation goals, then you have options. You can look for another job, perhaps a better job. Another option is to ask for a performance review in three to six months with an option to increase the salary and/or bonuses pending a positive review.



How can minor differences in wording make or break a negotiation situation? Practice phrasing negotiations correctly with your peers, family, or friends.

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Get the Offer in Writing

Once you accept the offer and its terms, it is reasonable to ask for a contract or to have the offer in writing.

Once you accept the offer and its terms, it is reasonable to ask for a contract or to have the offer in writing.

One way to do this is to send a follow-up email as a thank you and to state what you understood to be the agreeable terms of the job offer. The hiring manager would respond to your email confirming your understanding or with changes. A handshake agreement is nice; however, in negotiation, it is important to have the terms of the job offer in writing. This is more about memory than honesty. You may have negotiated a three-month review with a salary bump, but if the hiring manager does not recall that part of the conversation, you will be sorely sorry. It is recommended that you state, *"As we have discussed many facets of this position today, could you please send me the terms in writing so I can review them?"* Any business-minded person will appreciate your desire for details.



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Job Offer Acceptance Letter

Most offers will be negotiated and verbally agreed upon over the phone. Once that occurs, send a formal *job offer acceptance letter* (see Figure 8.9). Use the business letter format for this letter restating the particulars of the offer. Use the letter to confirm the salary and your start date. If you have further questions, call the hiring manager or supervisor and ask them directly. Do not ask questions in your acceptance letter.

Cyber Trip 8.4

Job Offer Acceptance Letter Samples Visit <http://www.quintcareers.com/sample/acceptingletter.html> or <http://www.career.vt.edu/jobsearchguide/acceptingoffer.html> to find additional examples of how to write a professional acceptance letter.

"Don't Sell the Farm" Yet

When you take a position, you are often under a review period for the first three to six months. While you might be relocating for this position, keep in mind your employer could decide your performance is not meeting the company's standards, thus ending your employment. While this is rare, one suggestion is to postpone selling your home during this review period. This is especially important if you would not have relocated had it not been for the new job. Rent an apartment until you have successfully met the probationary period.

Juggling Offers

Juggling offers is one of the good problems in life. However, it can be a problem. You want to make certain you are making the best possible decision

Nina P. Hanson
1234 Blue Spruce Court
Fort Worth, TX 7555
June 13, 20xx

Mr. Pete Jones
Operations Manager
Jones Construction Company
1234 Main Street
Dallas, TX 77777

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am pleased to accept your offer of employment as the office manager for the Fort Worth branch with Jones Construction Company, starting on July 6, 2015. The position sounds both exciting and challenging, two of the most important aspects of work to me.

I have thoroughly reviewed the details of your offer as outlined in the offer letter. I have signed and enclosed a copy of the offer letter as you requested. If I need to complete other paperwork before my first day of work, please mail it to me at my home address above. Thank you for your confidence and the opportunity to work with Jones Construction.

I am looking forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Nina P. Hanson

Nina P. Hanson

Enclosure

Figure 8.9 Job Offer Acceptance Letter

for you and perhaps your family. So, what is the best way to successfully juggle offers? What are you supposed to do if you receive an offer from one company while waiting for an offer from another? You can ask for more time to think over the offer. Do not explain why; simply ask for an extension. In the meantime, call the hiring manager of the other position to see if they will give you a timeline for their decision. Once you have this information, you need to decide if you are willing to tell the first company that you are waiting to hear from another firm. This decision comes with risks, as most companies would like to think you want them as much as they want you. Telling them might also elevate your desirability to the first company, but you won't know this.

How to Turn Down an Offer Successfully

Some fields such as nursing, information technology, and health care experience the glory of being in demand. It is easy to feel confident turning down

offers when you are in a seller's market. Keep in mind that networking is part of your career, and how you turn down the offer matters more than the fact that you decline. When turning down an offer your goal is to leave the impression that you are a person of integrity and to keep the hiring manager as one of your professional networking contacts. The following are more tips on declining a job offers:

- **Stay friendly and positive to all.** View the interview as a networking opportunity with colleagues in your field.
- **Be honest.** Let the interviewer know in the interview that *you have other offers you are considering, but are very impressed with their company and would like to work for them.* You do want an offer.
- **Gather more information.** Follow the preceding statement by finding out *when the company will be making its hiring decision.*
- **Buy time.** You can ask for more than 24 hours, but two weeks is not a good idea. You can tell the hiring manager you would like a few days to review the offer and in that time gather as much information as you can about the hiring time frame of other companies.
- **Can you afford to turn them down?** If you are offered a position, and put them off, you may lose that offer and the job you were hoping for may not come through. Make sure you are prepared for that to happen.
- **Decline professionally.** Thank the company representative for the time he or she spent interviewing you (and money if they flew you in, etc.). Let the hiring manager know it was a difficult decision. You can state a direct reason for your decision such as salary, location, or benefits. Ideally, you want to keep the door open, at least as a professional contact.



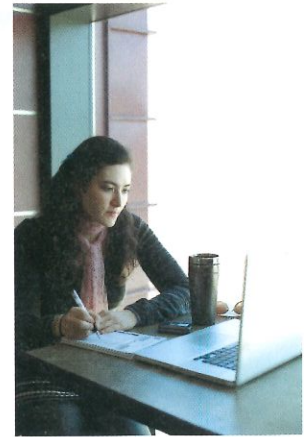
exercise 8.2

Mock Negotiation

Write your answers to the following scenarios or use the scenarios to conduct practice mock negotiation in class.

Scenario 1: You were the top candidate in the interview for the marketing manager position with the ABC Marketing Firm. The hiring manager calls and offers you the position with a base salary of \$58,000, plus benefits. With your extensive experience and now your degree, you were hoping for an offer of around \$75,000, plus benefits, as you currently earn \$63,000 as a marketing manager at your current firm without your new degree. How would you handle this situation? What research could you do to back up your asking for more base salary? Write out a script for what you would say on the phone to the hiring manager at that moment:

Scenario 2: Congratulations! The Department of Corrections just called to offer you the position of parole officer with a starting salary of \$38,000, plus benefits. While you are happy for the offer, you believe that \$38,000 is quite a bit lower than the starting salary for parole officers in your area. What do you say at this moment? What can you do to negotiate a better offer? Then what will you say if you call them back in the near future to renegotiate?



It is always important to follow your instincts when evaluating an offer, but why do you think it is also critical to weigh the pros and cons on paper?

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Cyber Trip 8.5

Salary and Negotiation Quiz Visit the website links that follow to quiz yourself on how much you now know about job and salary negotiation: http://www.quintcareers.com/salary/job_offer_quiz.html; <http://www.quintcareers.com/job-offer-tutorial>; and <http://www.academictutorials.com/quiz.asp?id564>.

Make a Decision—Then Make It a Right Decision

Sometimes the hardest part is making a decision. If you find that *all things seem equal* and you are at an impasse in making a decision, then it is time to make a decision. This is done after you have weighed all of your options and evaluated the job offer(s). When you are making a decision, write out the pros and cons of the offer on paper and weigh them, consult with those who help advise you, and listen to your intuition (gut). If you follow these steps and still do not get a clear “Yes, take it” or “No, don’t take it,” then at this point you need to believe in your ability to make a good decision. Make a decision and then go about making it a right decision.

One little known secret to making precisely the right move, at precisely the right time in your life, is knowing that in all cases, there is more than one right move and more than one right time.

—The Universe²

²© www.tut.com