



How to Handle a Salary Request

When an employer requests a salary history, many job seekers find themselves at a loss. You don't want to price yourself out of a job, but you don't want the employer to offer less than the going rate for the position.

So what's the right answer?

- Don't include salary history on your resume.
- Handle the request at the end of your cover letter. First, highlight your skills, experience, and interest in the position-information that is far more important to your consideration as a candidate.
- Respond to the question positively without giving a specific amount. (Example: "I'm earning in the mid-30s.")
- Say "salary is negotiable."
- If you know the market value for the position and for someone with your skills and background, give a \$3,000-\$5,000 range. (Use the free NACE Salary Calculator to find an appropriate range.)
- Be prepared to respond to this question in an interview. Carry a list of your positions in reverse chronological order, including the name of the company, your title, a synopsis of your duties, and, lastly, a general compensation amount (e.g. mid-30s).
- Don't lie about your salary history. Employers may verify salary history through reference checks.

Salary requests are difficult for all job searchers to handle, not just new college grads. The key is to shift the focus, politely but firmly, from what you made in the past to competitive compensation for the position you want.

Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers, copyright holder, www.naceweb.org.