Although negotiating a salary is an important part of the interview process, you need to fully understand the
dynamics of the job and benefits package before setting a specific price. Naturally, you will want to have some
type of salary range in mind prior to your interview. It is rare that a position has a set salary; most have a
salary range that can vary anywhere from a few thousand dollars to ten thousand dollars. Usually, the person
with whom you are negotiating has the authority to hire anywhere within the designated range. In order to be
more knowledgeable on current salaries for your particular degree and experience, consult the appropriate
resources in the Career Center. You can also locate such information by studying position vacancy
announcements or contacting company personnel offices. When approached with salary related questions,
there are numerous ways you might choose to respond. The following are a few such ways:

One: Do not volunteer salary information. If you are asked to indicate what type of salary you are expecting
when applying for the position, indicate that your salary is "open" in your cover letter. You do not want your
previous salaries to prevent you from receiving a larger salary, or to be d
 disqualified from consideration because
your salary expectations are too high.

Two: Do not exaggerate past earnings. As noted above, you may be disqualified from consideration if your
salary expectations are too high, or if the company believes you are accustomed to receiving a much larger
salary than they can afford to pay you.

Three: You will want to avoid answering salary related questions early in an interview considering your answer
to such a question will depend on your knowledge of the position particulars and stage in the interview process.
Therefore, if you are asked the question early, you might respond by saying, "I would like to hear more about
the dynamics of the position before considering a salary."

Four: If you are asked the question later in the interview but are hesitant about responding with a specific
salary range, you might reverse the question by asking, "What is the salary range for this particular position?"
Depending on the interviewer’s response, you could then agree or disagree with the range presented.

Five: If you are asked the question later in the interview and understand the dynamics of the position, but are
still wanting to be somewhat vague, you might respond by saying, "I am looking for a salary that considers my
educational background and experience, and is compatible with the responsibilities of my position."

Six: If you are confident about the type of salary you require to live comfortably, and if your background
justifies asking for a particular salary range, you might respond by saying, "Given my educational background
and experience, I am considering salaries ranging between $25,000 and $30,000." You will then need to
consider how you will respond to the interviewer if he/she agrees or disagrees with your specific range.

Seven: If you are asked to take a cut in salary upon being hired, make it clear that you expect the cut to be
temporary. If there are no promises of a salary increase within six months to one year, reconsider accepting
the position.

Naturally, once you have been hired and your salary determined, you will want to keep your salary and any
special benefits you received confidential. Inequities always exist within company positions, departments, and
levels. You want to avoid creating dissension between employees in your new job.

Unfortunately, job hunters make many costly mistakes where salary negotiations are concerned. Many are
unassertive in their request for a particular salary, and get taken advantage of as a result. Others are so
aggressive and demanding that they do not get hired. Hopefully this handout will assist you in handling this
delicate subject effectively.