

About Questions of Salary History:

Sometimes employers will request information regarding salary history on an initial application or during an interview. Employers utilize salary histories for several reasons. First, it helps them gauge an appropriate beginning salary range to offer. Second, they are able to determine if a prospective employee's expected salary falls within the budget for the position. Third, it indicates a prospective employee's performance based upon the frequency and amount of salary increases previously received.

When Asked about Salary, How Should You Respond?

On an application, you may use appropriate words, such as "open," "negotiable," and "competitive." When asked about your salary history, acknowledge the request, but try to respond in a general manner.

Examples Include:

- "Because of my steady increase in knowledge, experience and responsibilities, my salary has also steadily increased."
- "I would have to contemplate and calculate the exact figures with pen and paper."
- "I hope that this organization is one that will continue to recognize my contributions."

Regardless of how you respond to a question about salary history, avoid creating a relationship between your salary history and a current potential offer. The salary in question should be based uniquely on the value of the vacant position and your qualifications for it.

When to Begin Negotiating:

Although you *should determine a desired salary range prior to an interview* with an employer, **do not initiate discussion of compensation during the first interview**. Instead, use the initial interview to focus on the assets you could provide to the organization, rather than what it might provide you. In the event an employer broaches the subject of salary in your initial interview, do not evade the discussion.

The ideal time to begin salary negotiations is after a job offer has been officially extended. Prior to receiving a job offer, there is nothing to negotiate. The interview phase is the process of learning if you would be the best candidate for the position. Once the offer has been extended from the employer, it is clear that the employer is convinced that you are the best candidate. Please see a Career Consultant or view more Ready References about Salary Negotiation and How to Negotiate if you have any questions.