

PM 597: Interviewing Skills and Salary Negotiations Week Eleven

Interviewing Skills, Part 1

Hello, my name is Lori Shreve Blake and I'm the Senior Director for alumni and student career services at the University of Southern California Career Center, and we're going to talk about interviewing today.

Our learning objectives for today are going to be to define the purpose of the interview. What is the purpose of the interview? From the candidate's point of view to get the job, and from the employer's point of view to find the right candidate. We're also going to talk about preparation. Preparation is key in the interview. What you need to know before you go into that interview setting, your research, all the preparation, your attire that goes into preparing for the actual interview.

Also, we will talk about addressing different types of questions. So there are traditional questions, there are behavioral questions that an employer could ask you as well as stress questions, and illegal questions. How do you address those? Well we'll discuss that as well as during the interview that's your time to really shine and show why you're qualified for the position, and it's a great time because you get to meet the employer, understand more about what they're looking for in terms of a candidate, what the key responsibilities are, and it's also your opportunity to sell yourself. So it's really a great dialog opportunity for you, and then finally we're going to discuss follow up. So what are the next steps? Writing thank you letters and just kind of knowing after the interview what you need to do. So those are our learning objectives.

Next we have the purpose of the interview, so as you see from my header here I say interview plus you equals opportunity, and so it's important in the interview, and this is your purpose as the candidate to number one clarify the job expectations. You've read the job description but now you really want to know what is the breakdown of that particular job in terms of responsibilities. That's key. Also selling yourself, it is a persuasive kind of situation where you're trying to sell your experience, skills, and accomplishments, and kind of tie those in to the job responsibilities and expectations, and so that's an opportunity for you to do that as well as quantify your accomplishments.

One could, "I'm in charge of marketing for a particular brand," or you could say, "I'm in charge of international marketing and have responsibilities for branding this marketing all over the world." You want to quantify as much as you can, or within 5 countries, or 10 countries, or whatever that is.

Also assess the organization and potential fit. I say that 60% of a job is your boss and so in that interview setting you need to really decide is this somebody I want to work for? Is this going to

be the right culture for me? Is this going to be the right fit for me? Finally the interview was really a dialog not a monologue. I know that many people feel like they need to do all the talking and just keep answering questions that are fired at them, but really, it really is a dialog. You want to know what the employer kind of is looking for and also communicate what your skills are. You want to really get a sense for the employer's personalities, their culture. Again, is this employer going to be the right fit for me? So it really is a dialog.

You need to gain information from them as well as them gleaning information from you as a candidate, and finally you want to land the right job for you. Every interview you go on is not necessarily going to be the right job for you, but it's always an opportunity because every time you go on an interview one interview leads to the next interview to the interview that you really really need to shine, and interview skills are something that you kind of improve on as you go through your career, and so you want to land the job that is right for you and that's where you'll ascertain, hey is this really the right opportunity for me or not?

Interviewing from the employer point of view. The employer is sitting there. He has his notepad as you can see from the graphic here on the slide. He is trying to ascertain are you competent? Are you communicating effectively? How professional are you? Are you really motivated to do this job, and will you fit in with our organization? These are some of the key items that an employer is looking at when they are interviewing you and as they take notes on kind of what you're saying during that interview.

They are also trying to clarify the job needs and to prevent candidates from being improperly assessed. They need to make sure that the interview process is a fair process for everyone and that they are assessing you correctly, and at the end of the day they want to fill the job, but they want to fill the job with the right candidate and so that's where your qualifications and kind of the dialog that goes on between you and the employer is key, but at the end of the day we know they want to fill the job, and not just, don't just want to fill the job with anybody. They want to fill the job with the right candidate.

Before the interview, we talked about preparation as being one of the learning objections. Preparation is key, and so one thing you want to make sure that you know is what value do I bring to this organization, and in order to answer that question you have to also say, "What is the organization about?" You need to research the company, understand what are their major projects that they're working on? What's the history of the company? What are the new things that are trending as it relates to that company? The new objectives, their strategic goals, and really understand that piece, and you can research the company by using a lot of online resources, but you can also research the company by interviewing employees, talking to people, networking. Those are all great ways to find public information as well as insider information about that company.

Also, you want to develop key points and answers so what I always like to do before I prep for an interview is kind of write down questions that I think the employer will ask me based on the job description as well as general questions like tell me about yourself, or tell me about a time

you failed, or questions like that, but I also want to write down specific questions that have to do with the job description, and then what I end up doing is writing some bullet points about what I want to cover in each of those questions. I think that's a great thing to do, again that's prep you can do a week before, a few nights before the interview just so that you know what are the key points that I want to cover during my interview.

It's great to role play and role playing now, you know we've always had the mirrors around, so you can definitely role play some of these answers with the mirror, but you can also role play by contacting the career center. We have career counselors who will be happy to do mock interviews with you. You can role play with a friend or a colleague or a faculty member, and you can also role play electronically. You can actually video yourself using your iPhone or iPad. We have something at the career center called connectSC Interview Module, and there you have the capability to video yourself as well and see how you answer the interview questions.

Finally make sure that you have questions to ask the interviewer. I have talked to many employers over the years and I remember one employer telling me that if the candidate doesn't have questions during the interview then I don't want to hire them. So make sure you always have in your padfolio that you take with you with your latest copies of your resume a couple of questions written down that address the job requirements and again, this gives you more information to answer the question, do I really want to work for this company? Does this fit in with my goals as well?

Interview logistics, very very important. As you can see from the graphic I have here we see a traffic jam and that's not uncommon here in L.A. and in many cities around the U.S., so you have to be prepared basically. Number one, make copies of your latest version of your resume, that's always important. Again, take those with you. You may have updated some new information, experience, and so that's always great to have extras. Also I would add to that, take a listing of references. I would have a blank piece of paper with your full name and at least 3 references that you could leave with the employer should they ask for them, and you look very prepared as well in the interview when you have that information handy to hand to them.

Also, develop a portfolio of your work. I think that's really a great thing to do. These can be writing samples. It could be research projects you worked on. It can also be letters of recommendation that you've received from employers you've worked for, faculty, as well as another copy of your resume, and cover letter, any publications that you've been in as well as conference presentations. Any accolades that really show that you're really a great candidate and show samples of your work is always wonderful.

Also, the interview attire. Sixty percent of an interview is how you look and that's something you can control the night before, the week before, two weeks before the interview and so make sure you have that suit ready to go. You should have an interview suit, interview shoes that you kind of leave always prepared and ready to go. Make sure they're cleaned, the shoes are polished, and that ladies if you're wearing nail polish that it's appropriate. Also, ladies as it relates to jewelry, that it's simple. A simple pearl necklace, a simple pearl earrings are always

great, and then darker colors are great. The black navy gray tend to be power colors and those are always good for interviewing.

In some parts of the country where, I think on the east coast we are a little more conservative, even for women a dress suit with a skirt versus a pant suit can be preferred, so kind of knowing in terms of the cultural a little bit what's most appropriate I think is key, and so these are all things you can control the night before. Sixty percent is how we look and when we good we feel confident.

Also, practice the drive, and that's where my graphic comes in with the traffic jam that happens in L.A. every day through the week and so you want to take a dry run of the interview site and then also know the building. If you are coming here to interview at USC, well we have many, many buildings on many of our campuses and so you need to know which building do I go to, and then which floor do I go to? Make sure you know all that important information, and then what I always like to do is interview co-workers. Interviewing people who actually work at the organization that you'd like to work for would be great and you can find that information through LinkedIn, professional associations, and you know just say, "Hi, I'm a Trojan and I know you're a Trojan. You work for the Cedar Sinai Hospital I'd love to know more about the culture there and what you like about it, and anything I should know."

Also, it's always great to check in 15 minutes early, not more than 15 minutes. You wouldn't want to check in 30 minutes early or 20 minutes. You really want to keep it exactly at 15 minutes before your designated time to appear, and this is a great opportunity to have a seat, to relax, to actually see the co-workers interacting with each other. To make great impressions to the receptionist who actually is going to be rating you as well and saying if they like you or not, and it's a great time to kind of take a deep breath before the interview and so I highly encourage everyone to arrive 15 minutes before their scheduled interview. I've had other colleagues say, you know when someone's 15 minutes late to for an interview that should we even interview them? So if you're late they may not even interview you.

Okay, confidence to advance. The interview, I think these 5 steps are really key and very important. Number 1, dress appropriately and as I said 60% of the interview is how you look and that's something you can control the night before. Arrive in good time. Good time for me is 15 minutes before your scheduled interview. Body language is important. Make sure you're not kind of holding your head up with your hand and kind of doing odd things with your body. Make sure you're not overusing your hands. Sometimes people get very nervous and they start moving, fiddling with their hands too much and then that becomes a distraction.

Also, expect the unexpected and really we mean questions that they could ask you. They might put you on the spot. They might corner you in an interview with a question and we need to be prepared, and then finally ask questions. It's really important that you always have questions for the interviewer so that you show that you're motivated, that you're engaged, and you really want this opportunity.

Interviewing Skills, Part 2

There are many different types of interviews. There's the telephone, traditional, behavioral, panel, committee, lunch/dinner, case interviews, Skype, and written.

The telephone interview, typically, is an interview that is a first screen interview, so that will happen, usually, at your home. That's a wonderful opportunity, because you can have your resume out and all the notes and things that you want about the company. As they fire off those questions to you in a telephone interview, you can prepare to answer those, but, again, not be under their watchful eye. One thing that's important in a telephone interview is to smile and show enthusiasm. That actually adds more energy to what you're saying when you smile versus not smiling, so that's really key. Know that in a telephone interview you could be interviewed by one person or up to ten people. I know I had an interview one time, and ten people interviewed me over the phone. I said, "How am I going to impress these ten people?" But it worked and I moved on. So be prepared to be in a telephone interview setting with multiple interviewers.

There's a traditional and the behavioral interview. The traditional really is looking at hypothetical situations. They're asking you those general question that we typically know during the interview, "Tell me about yourself. How does this position relate to your goals five, ten years from now." Behavioral interviews look at a little different. They ask you what do you know in terms of experience, "Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult client. How did you handle that?" Or they might ask a question, "Tell me about a time you managed multiple projects. How did you handle it?" So it's really looking at past performance. They believe that your past performance equals what you'll do for them in the future.

The panel or committee interview. Again, that could be ten people. It could be two people to ten people, and being ready for that whole interview process. Also the committee interview could be, you interview with who your potential boss would be, and then during the course of the day you would interview with different groups within the organization. That could be a committee interview.

There's the lunch/dinner. There you just really need to remember that dining etiquette is key. Even what you order. You don't want to order that big hamburger for a lunch or dinner meeting. You want to order something that you can cut into small pieces, like a piece of meat, salad, things like that, that won't appear overbearing during a dinner or lunch interview.

Then there's the case interview. Case interviews are when they ask you questions that might be, "How many airplanes land at LAX in a given month?" Then you have to come up with how you would analyze, and how you would come up with those answers. It doesn't have to be the correct answer, but they're looking for your thought process and what goes into that.

There's the Skype interview. The Skype interview is probably something, again, you would do either at your office or at home with your home computer that has a computer in it. You just

have to remember to not look down. I'm a hiring manager, and I've conducted interviews before with people on Skype, and sometimes it looks like they're looking down at the bottom of the screen, the monitor. You need to make sure that you're looking into the camera and not at the bottom of the screen which is where you can actually see people that are interviewing you.

There's the written interview. This is where they're looking for writing samples. You actually have to write up questions and then send them in in advance or during the interview.

There's the traditional versus behavioral. The focus is, on the traditional, beliefs, communication, hypothetical situations, as I mentioned earlier. It would be a hypothetical like, "What would you do if a customer came in screaming at you, and your boss was also screaming at you, and your subordinates were entirely upset? How would you handle that situation?" So it's hypothetical. It's not that it's actually happened. However, the answer that you give should be something that happened in your past. "I haven't had that situation happen, but when I was studying at USC and working, I had this situation in my work environment, and this is how I handled it."

Behavioral interviews. Again, they want to know what happened in the past, because what you did in the past is what you're going to do for us in the future. They want you to think and react to complicated questions. They're looking for how you handle these questions. They can be a little stressful. They're looking for, "Is she communicating, or is he communicating, the story well?" They're looking for storytelling. "Tell me about a time where you handled multiple projects." "When I was in graduate school, working on my Master's in Public Health, I had a situation where I had a couple projects due. I was working on a research job and I was also helping colleagues with a team project we were competing for," and how you handled those three competing responsibilities at once. They're looking for professional style as well.

Some traditional interview questions. These are some samples. "Why are you interested in this position?" If you don't know, we certainly can't be the people to tell you. You need to know why did you apply for this position. "Tell me about a time you failed," I think is a really good one. I know that here on this slide, we talk about "What are your strengths and weaknesses," but that's been replaced by, "Tell me about a time you failed." So you need to have that ready to go. This is where the prep ahead of time will get you where you want to go.

What you want to do is give a win-win situation, so you have to think of that in your head. So you might say, "I failed in a certain situation. I had colleagues. They were depending on me. I should have communicated better, but now what I do is communicate via email. I keep people abreast of when we're working on team projects, and that's worked out really well." You want to tell about a situation, and then at the end of that, you want to tell how you have improved and what steps you're taking going forward, so that that doesn't happen again. The interview is a situation that you already want to spin in a positive way, not a negative way. Then also, do you have questions.

I just want to highlight some of the icons at the bottom. "Tell me something about yourself." They are going to ask you this in an interview. This is your thirty to sixty second infomercial, or your elevator pitch. We don't want to know how many dogs and cats you have, how many sisters and brothers you have and things like that. It really gets into education, experience, interests, as it relates to the position. I think these are some of the key areas. Now, if you are a person who competes in marathons or who is an avid golfer or something like that, you could add something in at the end, but really you want to answer that question from a business point of view.

Another icon: "What do you know about our company?" Again, that's research. "What do you know about the position you're applying for?" Again, you should know something about it, and have researched it.

Strengths and weaknesses, again, I think that's a little passé but you need to be prepared to talk about what are my strengths and then also, weaknesses. Weaknesses need to be win-win weaknesses. It can't be that my weakness is "I like to talk on the phone on when I'm not working on my job and play on the computer and surf the internet." That's not a good weakness. It needs to be a win-win weakness. It needs to be one that you don't get from the internet like Google, some canned response like, "I'm perfectionist." Too many employers have heard that. That's passé. Don't give us that. Give us a weakness that is a weakness, and then tell us how you're working to improve on that. Again, it needs to be in a positive manner.

Then an important question is, "Why should we hire you?" Again, if you don't know that as the interviewee, why should I know it as the interviewer? It's really important to answer that question, "Why should they hire you?" and really be able to talk to all of the points: my experience, my education, my motivation, my interests in the company, what I can bring to that company. All of that is key.

The behavioral interview. These are some sample questions that you need to know. "Tell me who are, really." That's a question, and that's what the employer's saying, when he's looking at the candidate, there in that graphic. Some questions that they might ask are, "Tell me about a time you managed multiple research projects, and how you handled it." Again, we want specific examples. Tell me your story. Another question might be, "Give me an example of when your leadership skills were tested." Again, we want a specific time. You need to start with the beginning, a middle, and an end of that story, and a story always has to end on a positive note. Also, "Tell me about your experience working with a team during a conflict?" That's another really good one. Then, "Give me an example of a time you had to make a difficult decision." This shouldn't be related to your personal life. It should be related to your professional life. So just keep that in mind as it relates to work.

Illegal questions. There are illegal questions that employers will ask, and these are just a listing of them. They should not ask you about your religion, if you have one, if you don't, what religion you subscribe to. They shouldn't ask about race or color. Americans are protected by labor laws that say that you cannot discriminate against people who apply for jobs that are 40

plus. Also, citizenship and naturalization versus native born. That should not be a question that's out of the gate. There are some employers, maybe in the government setting, that will say, "What was your country of origin?" Those are exceptions to the rule. There are certain job categories and classes where they may ask that, but, generally speaking, that should not be asked. It depends on the job requirements.

Also, physical disabilities: Do you have any physical disabilities? Many times disabilities are not apparent to the naked eye when somebody is meeting you, and they shouldn't be asking you about that. Military status is another thing that should not be asked, and many times, people, if they know there's a spouse that's married to a military person, will say, "Oh, when is your husband or wife going to be relocated to a new duty station?" This is an illegal question. Also, former name is illegal because many times they're looking to Google you, and we know they're going to do that in general, but they're saying, "Hey, is there any dirt that I can find on this person, having a former name through the internet?" That is also an illegal question.

Now, if an employer asks you an illegal question, you have to decide at that moment whether you want to answer that or not. You'll have to just decide, but it's important to know that these are illegal questions, and if you do answer the question I'd keep it to a minimum.

Topics to avoid during the interview. We have the graphic of the lady saying, "Shh," and that's what we need to do. These are things we should not talk about in an interview. Salary. Why not salary? The person who mentions salary first loses. I know we have a lecture on negotiating salary. It gets into that. I highly encourage you to look at that particular lecture on negotiating. One, if you mention salary, the person who mentions the number first, loses, because the employer could have more in their budget to pay you more or less. It could eliminate you too early, preliminarily. Also, if you're mentioning salary, are you more interested in the money than the job? You're in an interview to make sure you're the right fit for this job, and if you're coming out saying, "What does it pay?" That's the wrong priority, and the wrong message to send to a future employer.

Also, benefits, flextime. Again, we don't want to get into that: vacation time, sick time, professional development, employee perks. If you came to the Walt Disney company and said, "Oh, I'd like to know will I get an annual pass if I come and work for the Walt Disney Company?" That would be the wrong thing to say in an interview. We know there probably are those perks, but we wouldn't want to address that in an interview. They can tell you that later, when they actually offer you the position. Then promotional opportunities. Let's not talk about jobs two and three levels up from what you're interviewing for today. Let's focus on the job you're here to interview for today.

Interviewing Skills, Part 3

During the interview it's time for you to shine. That's so exciting. First you want to have first impressions. First impressions happen in the first 30 to 60 seconds of the interview. People decide, do I like this person or do I not like this person. At the end of the day people hire you because one, do I like this person? Do I want to look at this person's face 40 hours a week or more? Then they're asking themselves, will you fit in with the team? First impressions are lasting.

Attitude is everything. It's important to exude positivity, and energy, and enthusiasm for being at the interview and also when you're talking about your qualifications as it relates to that job description.

Also professional handshakes at the beginning and the end are very key. The interview is a listening test so when they ask you these questions, you need to answer the questions that they're asking and not answer something they're not asking. Be an active listener.

Then finally when you're talking to the employer during the interview, make sure you're using the industry language and terms that the interviewer knows. One, that makes you look like you're an industry insider and that you know what you're talking about and that you're qualified for the position. Also, the icons below: maintain eye contact. Eye contact shows what? Confidence. Avoid saying things like umm, basically, like, actually. These are things you want to avoid. You want to speak clearly and if you need time to think about what you're going to say, pause, and then move on.

Also smile. I always bring up a colleague that's at the USC Career Center with me who, during her undergraduate years, she interviewed for a bank teller position. The bank manager interviewed people all day long. She was the last interview and she had been smiling at the other employees, she was there 15 minutes before checking in, getting a feel for the culture, a feel for the bank, and when she met the bank manager she smiled. He noticed that she had been smiling to some of the other employees, but she smiled to him as well. As a result, he said, "You know what, I've been interviewing all day and you're the first person that smiled. You have the job." So it's important to smile and show enthusiasm, it really is the international language, smiling.

Then also, because we are Trojans we already know we're courteous, and we are professional, so just make sure you exude that during the interview.

Next we have delivery and technique. The first bullet says no Google answers. People now go on Google and they look for canned answers that they think the employer is going to ask during the interview. You want to make sure that you don't have those canned Google answers.



Also, when you're answering those questions, make sure that you use the STAR method, which is situation, task, action, and result. This is a great way to answer questions because it gives us, again, the beginning - telling the story. The task which would also be in the beginning, the middle - how did you act, and then finally the end, the result. Again the result should always be positive, and showing why you're qualified, and why you're the best candidate for the job.

Also be concise. We call it the 120-second rule which is two minutes max. We find that the people that have the most problem with this are the people that have a lot of experience. When you've had a lot of experience you're able to go on and on, and on, and so those who have had a lot of experience in the work-a-day-world need to make sure that they're not going more than two minutes. My sweet spot, if I had to give advice, would be a minute and a half max. I would even come well under the two-minute rule.

Communicate clearly, exude confidence, be positive and smile, and ask open-ended questions. I think these are really important because, again, the interview is a dialog, not a monologue so you want to ask those open-ended questions so that you get a sense of this company, the job responsibilities, what's going to be expected of you, so that you can answer the question, is this the right fit for me?

If you look at the icon to the right there, we have a gentleman and he is exuding great delivery at this point. He's just meeting the employer, and as you can see he's had his hair cut, things he can do the night before, he's clean-shaven, things he can do the night before. His smile we know he carries it with him all the time. He's confident. Maybe he's confident because he prepared for the interview, which again, are things we can do the night before. He's dressed well. Again, the night before the interview he can do that, and then he has a firm handshake. I think that's a great thing to show again at the beginning and the end of the interview. His body posture is confident. These are examples of what you need to know going into an interview.

Discussion points during the interview. The interview will be a dialog, as we said. There are specifics about the job and additional responsibility. These are things that you could ask the employer during the interview. Employer milestones - what would you like to see your ideal candidate accomplish during the first year? That's a very important question because you want to know is the employer being reasonable in terms of their objectives or are they way out of reason? If they are way out of reason, is that something that you can even accomplish? You want to know how realistic is this employer? Ask yourself, if I was hired, could I accomplish that within the first year?

Also, hiring manager background. People love talking about themselves. We've all had psychology 101 in undergrad. People love talking about themselves so asking the employer, tell me about your background, how long have you been with the organization, what is it that you enjoy about working for Cedar Sinai? Asking those questions are key.

Also the tenure of the last person on the job. Is this a newly created position? If so there's not going to be any tenure from the last person, but if not, you want to know how long was this

person in the job. If they say six months, red flag, red flag. Because that says, oh there might be a problem here. Maybe with my future boss, or maybe it wasn't the right fit, they made the inappropriate decision in terms of hiring, that would be a red flag. But if they say, oh this person was in the job for five years and they moved to a competitor, or this person was in the job for five years and now they've been promoted within the company, then that's a good answer. So again, that's information that you glean to make sure is this the right organization for me.

Also you want to know about next steps. You didn't get dressed up, and do all this prep, and fight traffic, and arrive 15 minutes early, and bring your confidence, and smile, and great attitude for nothing. What you want to ask them is what are the next steps. What's your hiring time frame? Is there going to be a second and third interview, what does that look like?

After the interview, you want to make sure that you send a thank you note. As you can see there are many languages here of how to say thank you. That's one of the most important words in our vocabulary is saying thank you to people. What you want to do is reflect on what went well in the interview and you want to send that thank you note within 24 hours of the interview. Also, make sure that you follow up regarding their time frame.

We're one step closer now. Congratulations, you got the second round interview. You're doing everything we ask you to do in this video, you've done your homework, now what? You have success. That's exciting.

You want to inquire, number one, who will you be meeting with in this next second round? Reflect on the answers that you gave in the first round, what went well, what did they really see that they liked when you said it, what really peaked their interest when you were speaking? I think that's important. You might want to reiterate that again in the second round interview. Incorporate information from the first interview.

Again, talk about your accomplishments and quantify. I could say, in my role at USC, I started an alumni career program for USC some years ago. Or I could say, I started an alumni career program for USC and we serve 300,000 alumni worldwide. What sounds more impressive? I think quantifying. Giving actual numbers of what you've done, whether it's been research projects with faculty, whether it's been internships, experience, how many colleagues you collaborated with in your classrooms, any quantifiers that you can give. Maybe you wrote a grant and received money and could talk about a dollar amount. Anything like that, any quantifiers are great to talk about your results.

Also be prepared to answer salary questions, but avoid them at the same time. You need to know going into the second round interview, what would be the range for this position and some great web sites are salary.com, there are a bunch of them out there, and I know our lecture on negotiating goes into further depth so I encourage you to delve into that. Also Glassdoor is another one that's good for salary. You do need to have a number in your head but you don't want to give it out. Again the person that mentions salary first, loses. When they

ask you a question like that in an interview would be, well I just want to make sure that I'm the right fit for this job and I'm confident that if I'm the right fit for this job, that Cedar Sinai, or Pfizer Pharmaceuticals will provide me a competitive wage. You just want to do that, but you need to still have that number in your head in case you get cornered in an interview which could happen during the second round, or even first round.

Finally, what you want to do is exude confidence, professionalism, and be very positive. Again, people want to work around people they like, and people that they can get some energy and motivation from. I think that's an important piece of it. It doesn't matter whether your job search has taken one month, or one year. You leave all that behind when you go into the interview, and you stay positive, and you stay upbeat, and you move forward knowing that your next door of opportunity will open.

In summary, what's going to get you the job offer is to practice, practice, practice. Practice your interviewing skills, so that means even applying for jobs maybe that you kind of want, but kind of don't want, just to get the practice. Then also using things like role playing in the mirror, with friends, with faculty, and electronically I think are great, but actually being in the interview, there's no replacement for that, so practicing is key. Interviewing is a skill that you are going to sharpen throughout your whole career. It won't happen the first interview, it won't happen the second interview, but it will happen over time.

One of my mentors told me one time they said, I interview every year Lori, even if I'm not looking for a job because I want to keep my interview skills up. Make sure you do that, even when you land your full time, professional position that you go on an interview once a year so that your interview skills are sharp, and that you're ready at any time should you need to interview.

Then also, tell your story of accomplishments. It's really about telling your story. At the end of the day when you're invited in for an interview, they know you can do the job. What's important for you to do is to communicate your accomplishments. Communicate your qualifications for the position. Really talking about that, quantifying them as I said earlier is key. Then staying positive, coming in with energy, confidence, and I have here, don't forget you're a Trojan. USC, our brand, is second to none. Trojans open doors for Trojans, Trojans are known for knowing how to network, knowing how to communicate effectively, and being professional, and also being courteous, and showing professional etiquette.

At the end of the day, when you sit in that chair remember, I'm a Trojan and if they don't hire me, it's their loss. The Career Center has purchased resources to help all students and alumni with improving their interview skills. One of them is our mock interview module that can be found under connect SC. This is just a screen shot of what that looks like. I highly encourage you to create a connect SC account, and from there you can go to the mock interview module. We have over 100 recommended interviews and you can actually find the interview that fits your expertise and background, and go for it. It will actually ask you about 10 questions and



then you respond with your computer and it videos you. So it's a great resource and one that we want you to tap into. That's just a screen shot to show you how you would get into that.

Also, the Career Center in partnership with the USC Alumni Association has purchased something called CareerBeam. CareerBeam is a 24/7 career management tool, and as you can see from this screen shot, in the gray area there is an interview prep section, and there again, you can do interview prep, and role playing, and look at potential interview questions that an employer would ask you. This is another great resource. This would be under the Resources tab of connect SC, so you do need a connect SC account. We highly, highly encourage you to get that and get that as soon as possible so you can tap into these resources that the USC Career Center as well as the alumni association has purchased to benefit our students and alumni.

For additional information, the USC Career Center, we're located on Trousdale Parkway across from Tommy Trojan in Student Union 110, and that's our general number listed there as well as our web site. Our web site will walk you through all the many wonderful services that we provide students, and alumni, and graduate students of course.

Thank you so much for joining me for this interview workshop and we look forward to helping you in the very near future. As we say here at USC, Fight On!

Salary Negotiations, Part 1

Hi my name is Denise Johnson. I'm the Career Services Manager at the USC Career Center. Today we're going to be talking about negotiation.

What we're going to talk about today are some basic questions regarding negotiation. Typically one of the questions that we get most often is how do we handle salary questions in the job application process? Then additionally, in the interview process.

We're going to look at today, answering typical salary questions that you may receive, how to defer a salary question from an employer, making sure that you can identify what actually is negotiable, preparing for the negotiation process, and then some helpful negotiation strategies to utilize throughout the interview and negotiation process.

Firstly, what type of salary questions do most people get? We get in the Career Center, what should I put on my application when I'm asked for a salary question? What is my salary expectation? How do I put that in there?

Basically, on an application if you can write negotiable or if the system will allow you to type in the word negotiable, you want to make sure that you do that. For some applications they may actually just need character spaces so what you want to do is in that area, in that box, you just want to use the space bar. Type spaces so at least something will be in that spot as you go through to produce the rest of your application.

Sometimes I heard that some people have actually put zeroes in there. Most employers know that you will not work for free, so I would always try to use the space bar first before you would type a zero in for your expectation for salary.

Typically salary is usually discussed once the offer has been made. You might have a verbal offer over the phone where someone says, "Hey, we'd like you to come work for us, what are you looking for, what's your expectation?" Sometimes that question happens a lot earlier in the process, maybe even on a phone screen before you've even been invited for the interview.

Salaries should be discussed during the offer time, but sometimes it has to be discussed a lot earlier. What should you say when you're asked about salary? You always want to try to defer for as long as possible. You want to make sure that you've already done your research. You've visited the websites that you know that are going to show you what typical positions make with your type of experience, your length of experience. That's what you're going to try to defer with the employer.

My next two slides are going to actually cover what you need to talk about when you're asked about salary. The first thing in order to defer the salary discussion is you just flat out tell them, "Let's talk about the job requirements and expectations first. When I get a better sense of what you need, then I can be better prepared to tell you what my expectations are."

Basically you want to make sure that you have done your research. You've gone to the websites that may have other positions that are similar to the one that you're interviewing with, and that you can come up with a number. You never want to just throw out a number like say, "Forty-five!" or, "Forty-five thousand!" because as a hiring manager I may have a sixty-thousand dollar hiring budget and that could be the salary. However, if you come in and say forty-five, I'll pay you forty-five, and I will save the company fifteen thousand dollars.

You want to make sure that if you need to give a number that you're always giving a range. You can always delineate that by the last bullet here which says, "According to the research I've done for this type of position, I'm looking to be within the forty-two thousand to fifty-three thousand dollar range." Something like that is perfectly fine to tell an employer whether it's a first-run interview, even if it's a phone screen before the interview process.

Basically what this means is from the minute that you decide to apply for a position you want to make sure that you do your due diligence in terms of finding what is appropriate salary, what's the length of hours for the job. You want to make sure that you have done all that research so that you're ready if you do get a phone call, because sometimes employers will call just to make sure that what they have available to offer you for salary is something that you'll work for.

If you have a job where you're making sixty-five thousand dollars a year and you're looking for another job, and maybe you're going from the private sector into a non-profit and the non-profit's only going to pay you forty-five, you need to be able to answer that question. Are you able to lose that much in salary or do you need to find different ways to make that up or do you negotiate for other things within that job position? You always want to make sure that you are ready to go at a moment's notice because sometimes with employment, that's how it happens.

These are some potential websites that you might want to look at in order to determine what is a reasonable salary for the type of experience that you have and for the type of job that you're doing. Typically in the Career Center we refer people to [payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com), [Glassdoor](https://www.glassdoor.com), the BLS, the Bureau of Labor Statistics is a really great website, although it's sometimes difficult to navigate so you've got to spend some time there to determine what you need to find, but it is a very good website.

There's also [cbsalary.com](https://www.cbsalary.com) where you can actually search via the region that you're going to be in, the state that you're going to be working in, so you get a little bit more awareness of actually where you're going to be because clearly what you make in California would be different than what you make in New York City or something or a larger state or in the Midwest.

You really want to make sure that you don't overprice yourself out of a job because you're just coming up with some random number that sounds good to you or because your friend got the same number or something like that. You always want to make sure that you're looking at that, and CB Salary will help you with that.

Lastly, we have salary.com, and basically when you're looking at these websites you really want to make sure that you're paying attention to the job description. You should already have the job description from the job ad that you're applying to, and then you want to make sure that you click on the link that gives you the same years of experience. If you're looking at zero to two or zero to three years of experience, that salary would statistically be a lot different than if you've got seven to ten years of experience. You want to make sure that you're in the right ballpark before you actually start throwing out numbers with an employer.

Getting back to negotiation. What is actually negotiable? Honestly, anything is negotiable. You can negotiate your title, your salary, obviously the hours that you work. You can negotiate responsibilities or opportunities or professional growth things that you want to do or conferences or things of that nature. You can also negotiate typically a signing bonus, usually that's something that's paid to first-year students as they graduate from undergraduate college; that's something that you usually would get as a signing bonus, but typically that only comes with your first job. It usually doesn't come in successive job opportunities after that.

You do want to be looking at relocation. If the company's asked you to move from southern California up to San Francisco, you probably want to ask for a relocation bonus or relocation monies or funding because of the travel back and forth from here to get all your stuff back up to San Francisco. Plus, you want to look at the cost of living. What does an apartment cost up there versus down here in southern California?

Those are things that you also can negotiate. Obviously you can negotiate performance-based bonuses and commissions, as well. However, I will caution you that if you have the option to negotiate a bonus versus a salary, I would always go with negotiating your salary because bonuses are typically charged at a much higher tax rate than your normal salary is. In the end result you'd get more money based upon the salary negotiate other than the bonus.

We find in the Career Center that most students and most recent alumni are really afraid to negotiate because they believe that maybe the job will be pulled from them. Maybe the employer will not want to deal with the negotiation and pull the offer or they'll end up going, "Oh well we were going to offer you forty-five, but now that you're negotiating we're offering you forty." That's really not what happens.

Basically, you want to negotiate. Companies are expecting you to negotiate. If you don't, that's fine. Don't feel like you have to negotiate, but you are able to do so if you feel the need to do that. Most companies expect to negotiate and sometimes they will give you a lower job offer with the expectation that they will come up in salary based upon the negotiation that they complete with you as the perspective candidate.

Again, before negotiating you really want to make sure that you are doing more research on perhaps the industry as well as the organization that you'll be working for. One of the things that you want to look at is how the company doing? How is the industry doing? Is it an industry

that's on its way up or is it an industry that's going down? Have there been company takeovers? Has the company recently declared bankruptcy yet they're still offering you a position?

There's a lot of things that go into what you're going to be looking at before you negotiate. What's happening in the geographical region the company is situated in or are they moving the company headquarters from California to another state? What happens to the employees that are here in the local offices? Those are some things that you want to look at.

Typically you can look at the Wall Street Journal, you can look at trade magazines; anything that's going to give you some input as to what's going on in that industry. Perhaps you have somebody that works at the company. Maybe they're an insider, you can get some inside information from them regarding what it's like, how's it going. Those kinds of things. Perhaps you could also reach out to a local alumni club that is in the area of where you'd be working and see if you could talk to somebody in the alumni club regarding that organization or just the industry in general.

You always want to make sure that you have read and reviewed the job description and the offer letter so that you can highlight any questions that you might have for an employer, for the recruiter or for whomever hired your salary letter. Typically, when you receive your offer letter you want to always contact the person that signs that letter whenever you have questions regarding anything in the offer letter or even if you want to negotiate. You always want to make sure that you email that person. Whether it's the recruiter or whomever. You want to email that recruiter and arrange time for discussion. You never want to randomly call an employer, especially the recruiter, to ask about salary.

If we're not prepared, it sometimes is a very awkward conversation. Besides, we're human. If we're having a bad day or if there's a lot of deadlines that are coming up in the office and I really don't have the time to talk to you, I may not be as forthcoming with the ability to negotiate as if I was prepared and did actually put aside X amount of time to talk to you.

When you get your offer letter if you know that you want to negotiate or you have questions regarding the offer in general, make sure you email the recruiter, express your excitement, that you're really happy that you have the offer but you have some questions, and you'd love to set up a time to discuss them. The recruiter will most definitely put aside some time for you so that you can talk verbally, over the phone regarding any questions you have.

You never want to negotiate via email. Very difficult via email to feel or to get a sense of the non-verbal's that happen. Clearly on the phone you can't get the non-verbal's either, but you do get the inflection in the voice. You can tell if someone is a little bit distracted or if they're annoyed or if they're actually just genuinely happy. It's a little bit easier conversation to have via the phone rather than an email.

Some realistic steps once you are thinking about the negotiation process or even when you're thinking about graduating and moving on, and becoming some person in the world of work;



which you all will be eventually. You want to make sure that you develop a budget so that you know what it's going to cost you for your housing, for clothing, for food. Maybe you have a car. Maybe you didn't need a car before, you had a bicycle or you took public transportation. Now you have to have a car. What's that going to cost you? Do you have insurance that you have to pay for now, what is that going to cost you? What is your lifestyle? Were you a Starbucks person, every day you had to have coffee? Well now welcome to the world of work, you may not have enough money for that every day.

You want to make sure that you have a realistic budget of what you can expense ... What you're going to expend every month on bills. If you have student loan payments what are those payments? Do you support any family members or do you have pets that you support? Those are things that you really want to make sure that you're looking at because as that one infographic says up there, "If you don't know your own worth and value, don't expect someone else to calculate it for you." That's your responsibility, and if you really want to make the best opportunities for yourself you're going to make sure that you know your own worth and your own value.



Salary Negotiations, Part 2

The next thing we're going to talk about is understanding limits. When you get ready to do your negotiation you want to make sure that there's thing that you're thinking about, and there's also things the that the employer is thinking about.

As a perspective employee, you're thinking about: What is my need versus my want? Yes, I would love to make six figures, but do I really need to make six figures, or do I want to make six figures?

Maybe you're in an industry where that's what you're going to make. Great, congratulations, that's wonderful, but some of us are not going to make that when we're right out of college, whether that's with our undergraduate degree or a master's degree. You need to really make sure that you understand what's your need versus what your want is and how that relates.

Then, you're also going to want to know what is the minimum that you will accept working? Nobody wants to work for \$25,000 a year. Nobody wants to work for \$4.00 an hour. What is the minimum that you can live on without having to eat super cheaply every night or only eating one meal a day? Because that's not what we want for you. We want you to make sure that you can have a strong and successful and prosperous professional life once you leave the University of California. Make sure you know what is your minimum.

Also, make sure you have an idea of what the maximum you can ask for. If you know people in the industry and you know the maximum salary is 70 for someone that's right out of school, don't be asking for 75 or 80, because it's not going to happen. Then, it just looks like you really didn't do your homework, and you're just throwing out numbers to see if something's going to stick.

The questions that the employer thinks about are, basically, this might sound a little harsh, but is what is the least we can offer? Because as an employer, you've got a lot of other things on your plate just besides employees salary. You're paying health care. You're paying for medical costs. You're paying for office supplies. You're paying for the building rent. You're paying for all these things. But as a worker person, as an employee, you're not concerned with that. You're just concerned with going in, doing my job, having my salary, having my life. There's a lot things that the employers are looking at that. They're always going to think about what is the least that they can offer. Then, they're also going to find out what the maximum they can give is. Typically, when employers go to post a brand new position, there is a budget in place for that job. It's just not pulled out of the air, and we say, "Oh, we think we want a new position, and we're going to pay X amount of dollars." It's budgeted so everybody knows exactly what the salary range is, and they're always going to try to get you in, like I said earlier, at the lower rate so that they can negotiate that up when you're ready to do your salary negotiations.

Additionally, the employer's also thinking about: what is the employee's benefit to my company? Always in the interview process, the recruiter, the hiring manager, whoever you're

looking at, whoever you're interviewing with, is always thinking about where are you going to go in my company. You may start out entry-level. Most people don't have a life-long ambition to remain an entry-level employee. Most people want to move up. They want to supervise. They want to manage. They want to make partner. Whatever it is, people don't want to stay at that same level. As an employer, I'm always thing about: where are you going to go? If I hire you, what's the benefit? What are you going to bring to my company? Where are you going to move throughout my company to make it, basically, mutually beneficial for you and I to get together and enter this world of work?

The other thing that you want to think about when you're looking at negotiation is negotiation is really way more than just the salary. You want to take a look at total compensation of what you're getting. What is your total compensation package? As success kid says, "They're look at everything." Total reimbursement. What's your tuition reimbursement? Is there a tuition reimbursement? Will they pay for a graduate degree? Some employers may pay the full graduate degree. They may for a full, complete masters. Some may pay a portion if you make an A. Some may pay a portion if you make a B. Or, if you don't do better than Cs, then you won't get anything reimbursed to you.

Those are the things that you're going to negotiate. Obviously, in the interview process, you don't talk about any of these things in the interview process. You are focused strictly in the interview process on showing your fit, showing your qualifications, and letting them know what you can do for their company. This is all going to come to pass once you get the offer letter and you open up into your salary negotiations.

You always want to see if there's any professional development opportunities. Are there conferences? Are there classes? Do they offer anything for employees to do to grow in their respective fields? Is there profit sharing or retirement programs? Do they have a 401? Do they have some type of retirement program to allow you to save for when you're no longer working?

What health insurance do they have? Legally, companies do not have to offer health insurance. Typically, companies that are 50 or more need to, but start-ups sometimes will not offer health insurance. In California, it is not illegal to not offer health insurance.

You need to figure out what they have to offer. What's going to be the best course of action for you to take regarding that, and then how to utilize that to your advantage?

You can also negotiate your work schedule. Maybe this is an office that allows you to do some flex time. Maybe you work one day from home, or maybe you spend more time on the train coming into work, perhaps, so you get a day comped once a week. It's whatever you decide to work out with your HR people or whomever you're hiring manager was at that point.

You can also negotiate for, perhaps if they don't give you salary, maybe they give you an extra day of vacation, or they give you something else. Those are all things to talk about.

Finally, you want to look and see if there's any kind of car allowance. If you're in sales, typically there is a car allowance, and there's also a cell phone allowance. Some different industries, the more high-engagement driven industries, sometimes consulting, investment banking, accounting, your finance areas are all going to give you a cell phone and have a cell phone allowance because your employer wants to be able to reach you, sometimes, 24 hours a day.

That's another thing you want to take a look at. Maybe you negotiate that. Maybe on the weekends you say, "On Sunday, I don't answer my phone." Some type of concession from the employer for you which makes your life a little bit more peaceful and a little bit more easier to live with. But you always want to think about the entire compensation package when you're looking at the whole negotiation process.

What are some of the key strategies in negotiation? The first one that you want to make really sure that you're aware of is know what is negotiable. When we talked about earlier about what's in the offer letter and you're total salary package and know what's in there, you need to really have an idea of what you need and what you want.

So that A: If you call the employer and you're talking to the employer and you're expressing your excited-ness, you're expressing the emotional happiness have for having an offer, and you're really excited to work for them, most people don't know how to say I'd like more money. Basically, all you have to say is: Is there movement in the salary? That's it. It's that simple.

At that point, once you ask is there movement in the salary. There's two ways that can go. Either yes, and you get to talk about what you think your salary should be, or no, and then you have to go back and fall onto some of those other things you can talk about.

Sometimes the employers will say, "Well, we can give you \$3,000 more if but you're going to have to talk to your hiring manager to get the rest." As you negotiate, I would always try to encourage you to try doing all of your negotiations through the human resources people or the people that are signing your offer letter.

Sometimes it's a little bit strange when you're trying to nickel and dime your hiring manager when this person is actually going to be your boss. If you can do it and you can swing it, you always want to try to negotiate with the human resources representative from the company, but always make sure that you're negotiating beyond the salary, especially if they tell you there's no movement there.

You also want to make sure that you do not underestimate the importance of likability. Clearly the employer liked what you had to offer. You answered all the questions correctly in the interview process. They know what you have. They think you're a great fit. They think it's going to be a win-win for both you and the employer.

You want to make sure that you utilize that knowledge to the best of your ability. Basically, what you need to do is, you need to make sure that if you are going to negotiate that you have

a list of things that you want, or that you're going to ask for, and you need to bring all of those to the table at the same time.

Don't do one thing and then come back and ask for another thing. Get that, and then come back and ask for another thing. You don't want to be making three, four, five phone calls back and forth to this HR representative. You want to be able to put everything out in one shot and discuss everything at one time.

Additionally, if you do have four or five things that you really want, you want to make sure you let the employer know in priority order what is most important to you. Because if you just send the recruiter or the HR person a list of these are the thing I need, and you give them five things, and maybe he gives you two things back, but those two things ended up being the fourth and fifth things on your list in terms of priority, the employer's going to think, "OK, I gave him at least two. I gave him to things, so now he's going to give me a yes. I'm going to come and work for you."

It's a little awkward when you have to call the employer back and say, "Well, you know those were on the bottom of my list." You don't want to go through that process. You always want to be above board. You want to make sure you have all of your ideas and what you need ready to go, and you can walk through them in priority order.

So that you're putting in place, number one, what is most important to you. If salary was one and you don't get that, then what's number two? What's number three? Then, work down your list with that.

Additionally, you really want to make sure that you understand the person with whom you're talking. You understand the person across the table. Employers all have different types of economic needs. Even if an employer is a Fortune 500, multi-billion dollar corporation with international offices, they may not be rolling in cash. No one is going to tell you that bottom line, because that's not something as a perspective candidate or a newly offered candidate that you would even be entrusted to know.

You need to understand what's going on. You need to listen very clearly, and you need to actively listen to what that recruiter or HR person is talking to you about. Listen to the inflection in their voice. You can always tell when someone smiles because their voice kind of goes up a little bit. You need to listen for some of those clues in your dialog when you're talking to them.

Again, I said it a little bit earlier just now, you really need to make sure that you are actively listening and participating in this negotiation. If possible, you want to do it in your apartment, preferably when your roommate are gone or no one's around. Or you need to find, if you can't do it anywhere else, you need to find a quiet place. I don't know if your car might work for you, or a quiet place on campus would work for you, but somewhere where you can actually give a 150% of your effort to this person that you're talking to try to negotiate your salary.



It's very important that you do that, because if you try to rush things up a little bit, you may come away with not getting everything that you wanted. We want to make sure that you get everything that is physically possible for the employer to actually give you.

Finally, we want to make sure that you're patient. Sometimes negotiation can take a long time. You may be able, when I say a long time I mean maybe a week, week and a half, two weeks, because there could be people that the HR person needs to talk to or the hiring manager needs to touch base on or they need to look at the budget or maybe they have to wait until the fiscal year starts again.

There's a lot of things that are in play here when you're negotiating. You always want to make sure that you're patient. You always want to make sure that you're always engaged and you have a good inflection in your voice when you're talking to people. Try not to get disheartened or seem upset with the recruiter that you're talking to or the HR representative that you're talking to because some of these things may take a little bit of time because it is an employment opportunity.

People work. Maybe the hiring manager is somewhere overseas doing business. They're at a conference. People are gone. It's life. You have to be able to be a little bit flexible and to be very patient within this process.

Salary Negotiations, Part 3

Some of the things that you don't ever, ever want to do while negotiating is patronize the negotiator. You don't want to ever make it seem that they are playing a very trivial role, or that they don't understand what you're going through. None of that, because basically it just reflects negatively on you and I have a peer, I'm jumping a little early, but bottom line is, don't ever show a lack of judgment when you're in any process in the employment area. Whether that's the interview process, whether that's networking with people. Don't ever show a lack of judgment because it will really negatively reflect back on to you and then on to that person's impression of you. That's not really what you want to leave them with.

Really make sure that you're never patronizing the negotiator. Do not ever let your ego do the talking. I have heard students go, "Well, don't you know I graduated from USC?" Well, yes. I think that's great that you did that, but I can only offer you x amount of dollars. This is it. Take it or leave it. That first little graphic up there says that salaries negotiable. Take it or leave it.

Sometimes that's what it's going to get down to. We don't anybody going godfather on us, so that's why I put that little picture up there. Don't give ultimatums, please, in the negotiation process. Don't ever let yourself get angry. Don't give an ultimatum, "Well, if you don't do this, I'm leaving." None of that stuff goes on in the negotiation process in any part of your life.

Usually, you're going to be using some of these skill sets as you move through to do other things, buying a house, buying a car. Whatever it is, you're going to be also using some of these skill sets in other parts of your lives. You really want to make sure that you're not getting angry at people, that you're not giving ultimatums, so that you can actually have a win, win negotiation. Everybody's happy, everybody is mutually beneficial. We've all benefited, it's great. It's lovely, and we're going to have a great working relationship.

The last thing that you want to never, ever do while you negotiate is share information about your financial needs. A lot of students, especially that come into our office, think things like, "Oh, well, if I'm working now in finance or consulting, I have to buy a lot of suits. I'm going to need a lot of money for suits." You're going to be telling the negotiator, you're not going to be telling the HR person, "Oh, gee. I need more money. I need \$5,000 more because I need to buy some new suits."

You can negotiate for that. That's definitely something that you can do. You would typically try to do that, but you're not going to share that information. Or, "I have a ton of student loans to pay off. I need x amount of dollars more." Because you know that? That's not the employer's responsibility. That's not their interest. They're interested in what you bring to the table. What you're going to be able to do for them. Let alone, that personal aspect. That does not come into the negotiation piece, whatsoever.

Try to make sure that you're not going to be sharing too much information. Most employers think that most students when they leave with either their undergraduate degree or they're

graduate degree, that there are some student loan issues that happen. That's a normal occurrence. Some professionals will actually give you a little bit of leeway within the negotiation process. Some companies actually, if you go to work for them, will pay off your student loans.

Those are things that, if that's going to be a big issue for you, you need to look into other options about how to utilize and maximize working, in order to make whatever money you need to make to pay for other types of debt and things of that nature that you have when you enter the world of work.

These are just some different books that we have found very helpful in the Career Center in the negotiation process. The first book on the top left is *Getting To Yes* by Roger Fisher and William Ury. They're really all great books. We've got *Salary and Negotiation, How to Make A Thousand Dollars a Minute*, by Jack Chapman. You can't really see his name, but that's what it is, it's Jack Chapman. *The Tao of Negotiation* by Joel Edelman and Mary Beth Crain. You've got *Negotiation for Dummies* which is the typical negotiation Dummies book, so that's very useful. The *You Can Negotiate Anything Book* by Herb Cohen, and then finally, the *Everyday Negotiation Book* that's written by some negotiation PhDs that is really a successful and strong book.

Any of these books are good books to look at just for resources and references. There are many, many others, but these are some of the top books that we have found students have been successful with after utilizing some of the techniques, as well, in some of these books.

Remember, anything is negotiable. Anything you're talking about in the world of work is negotiable. All you have to do is come up with list of things that you like and then it's a give and take, back and forth with the negotiator. I've had some students ask, "Should we try and negotiate via Skype." If you're very comfortable Skyping and going back and forth with someone, I would say more power to you. Go ahead and do that. However, if you're a little nervous, which most people are when they talk about negotiation, probably utilizing your phone where can actually have all the notes in front of you written down, so that you can glance down and not look like you're looking at this person the whole time while you're Skyping.

Typically, probably, negotiation on the phone is a little bit easier way to go, than Skype. If you feel comfortable doing that, make sure that you utilize whatever you're most comfortable with. Again, you want to make sure that you do your homework and you're looking at every available option for what could be available and what is available for you through the negotiation process.

You always want to make it so that it's a positive for both sides, that everybody is coming out with what they want which is basically, you want a job, and work at this company. The company wants to hire you. They want you to work for them. That's the win, win that you



want, and that's what you want to make sure that you continue to have within the whole negotiation process.

Always make sure that you're looking at the total package that you get. Sometimes, let the salary go. If there's not a signing bonus, let it go. It's that important. Just make sure that you're looking at what you really need and what you want. Know your bottom line. What's most important to you? What is a must have and what is "Oh, I'd like to have this." That's really going to help you through the negotiation process.

Finally, always stay civilized. There's never an issue of, "Oh, I shouldn't have said that." There's never a regret issue, or "Gee, did I come over a little bit too intense on that?" If you're civilized. You always want to make sure that you are listening to the person that's talking to you. That you're making what would appear to be normal and natural requests. You don't need to concede everything. You don't need to concede everything just to get the job, or you think you have to.

You have a portion in this, too. You have a vested interest in this agreement of this offer, as well. Additionally, please know that there is nothing like an employment contract. The employment offer, is merely an offer. When you sign that offer letter, saying "Yes, I'm going to work for you." That's basically just a verbal acceptance that you are going to work for this company. There is no contract. There is no employment contract and you are an at will employee.

In the State of California, employers and employees are at will, which means that as an employer, I can let you go whenever I feel the need and as an employee, you can leave whenever you want. There are certain areas, or certain companies that might put in an employment contract. I have yet to really know one that does that, but I have heard that there are some that do that. Just know that this whole offer letter is not a fully functional contract.

Some of the things that you may sign as part of your offer, a non-compete clause, something of that nature, a noncompetitive clause. That, or you're going to go to arbitration if there's a problem. Those are enforceable but the normal employee contract where I'm going to work for you and you're going to pay me a salary, that is not something that is typically, legally enforceable, because California is an at will State. Continue to make sure that you're aware of that as you go into the process.

Hopefully, you've learned some more things about negotiation. If you do have more additional information, please feel free to go to our website at careers.usc.edu, to use some of the resources that you find there, and happy negotiating and best of luck to you.