

## Determining a Realistic Salary

Before you interview, research salaries in your field and be prepared to quote a salary that is appropriate for you profession, your level of experience and the geographical location.

## Salary Information Resources

- **Professional Organizations** often conduct salary surveys as a service for their members. The information may be broken down by professional niche, gender, geographical location, experience level, etc.
- **AIA Compensation Report:** The Career Services office has a copy of the most recent AIA Compensation Report that you can review in 297 Design.
- **Design Career Services** conducts a survey of each graduating class that includes salary ranges, averages and median for each major. The information is E-mailed to students each semester, is published in the Career Services Annual Report, and is linked to the Career Services website under Job Search Tools, Salary.
- **Salary Calculator:** Link to this useful site via the Design Career Services Website, Links, Job Search Links or go to [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com).
- **Chambers of Commerce:** Visit the web site for the Chamber in your chosen city for Cost of Living Indexes and additional information to help you in your search.

## Responding to salary questions

Employers usually have a predetermined salary range for entry-level employees and are prepared to negotiate within that range. Ideally, they would like to bring you

onboard at the lowest range thus usually begin negotiating at that point.

**Requests for salary history** to be included with your resume and cover letter are occasionally mentioned in newspaper job ads most often for positions requiring years of experience. An acceptable response could be,

- "As a recent college graduate, my priority is finding a position that offers excellent experience and growth potential in my area of interest. I am willing to discuss a salary that is within an appropriate range for entry level salaries in my field."

## How much are you making now?

- "I would prefer to discuss all aspects of the position before looking at salary issues." (*Salary should be based on the responsibilities of the position for which you are interviewing. Your current salary is not relevant to determining the salary for the position for which you are interviewing?*)

## How much do you think you are worth?

- "I am looking for the maximum, fair compensation for the responsibilities involved in the position."

## What salary would you require to accept the position?

- If you reveal to an employer that your salary range is say, \$ 27-31,000, you have weakened your negotiating position. The employer most likely will offer you \$27,000. However, answering the employer with \$31,000, the high end of your range, will provide greater probability for the two of you to agree on a salary within your determined range.