

The Noel Smith-Wenkle Salary Negotiation Method

The Method in Action

If they try to get you to name a figure on the application, leave it blank. You want them to ask for a number verbally.

Step 1. The first time they ask you how much you'll take, reply:

“I am much more interested in doing (type of work) here at (name of company) than I am in the size of the *initial* offer.”

This sentence is constructed with great care. You may want to memorize it. It does several things for you. It's great public relations. The vast majority of people answer their question with a number. Because you have focused on the job and not on the compensation, you have instantly distinguished yourself from the thundering herd. You have also dodged their question. Noel said that about 40% of the time this is all you need, and the hiring manager will go off and look up your numbers and make you a fair offer. However, over half the time, they will ask you again.

Step 2. The second time they ask, reply:

“I will *consider* any *reasonable* offer.”

This is basically a stalling tactic. The word “consider” has a lot of leeway in it. Add to this the large amount of slope in the word “reasonable,” and obviously the sentence has no meaning at all. But you've been polite, and once more you've refused to name the first figure. Noel said that in only about 30% of the cases was it necessary to go to step 3.

Step 3.

“You are in a much better position to know how much I'm worth to you than I am.”

Once again, you have been polite, and again you have refused to name a number. You have also told them, in so many words, that you are onto their little game. If they ask a fourth or even a fifth time how much you'll take (Noel said it rarely happens), repeat step 3.