

TIP SHEET: Interview – Salary Expectations

How to Answer Questions about Salary Expectations

A common but tricky interview question is the one about salary expectations. There are several important factors to consider when answering this question.

Consistency

If you're working with an employment or recruitment consultant, changes are they will have discussed the salary for the role with both you and the potential employer before the interview. It is important to know how your consultant has represented your salary expectations so that you can provide a consistent answer.

Timing

Although this should never happen, if you are asked the salary question at the beginning of the interview (e.g. before you've had the opportunity to demonstrate your skills, experience, and what you bring to the role) it's a good idea not to provide a specific answer. You could say something like this:

"I'm more interested in finding a position that is a good fit for my skills and interests. I'm confident that you're offering a salary that's competitive in the current market."

Context

Before you answer the salary question, consider the wider market context ie your current salary (if you're in a similar job) and average market rates for similar jobs. If your current/previous job is in a similar field, you might like to answer like this:

"In my current/previous role, I am paid X amount. I have been on that salary for Y amount of time (or I am due a pay review in Z months)."

Quick Tips

- Consider the timing of this question in the wider interview.
- Provide a salary range rather than a set number.
- Discuss salary as well as other benefits.
- Aim high (and leave room to negotiate)
- Be confident.
- Explain your reasoning.