IMPACT Negotiation Group

FREE WORKSHEET

Salary Negotiation Worksheet

Prepare for a new job offer or a pay rise with the 7-step method professional negotiators use.

The 7-step salary negotiation preparation method



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How to use this worksheet

1. Choose your route below: a new job offer (A) or a raise in your current role (B).
2. Work through the steps in order. Each step builds on the one before.
3. Type into the fields on screen, or print the pages and write by hand.
4. Finish with the one-page brief on the last page and take it into the meeting.

	Route A: a new job offer	Route B: a raise in your current role
Strongest evidence	Market benchmarks, the advertised range, your other options	Documented results since your last pay review, expanded responsibilities
Timing	After the offer, before you accept	Before budget and review cycles close
Main contact	Recruiter or hiring manager	Your manager (often with HR or finance)
If the answer is no	Explore the rest of the package, or decline	Ask what stands in the way and get a revisit date in writing

My route: ☐ A: new job offer ☐ B: raise in current role

Step 1 · Research the market

Record three to five benchmarks for comparable roles. Match on responsibilities, seniority, location, industry and company size, not on job title alone.

Source and date	Role match and level	Location	Pay basis (gross, monthly/annual, no. of payments)	Base only or total package?	Range or median
My defensible range					

Tip: check whether a figure includes holiday allowance, a 13th month or variable pay before you compare it.

Step 2 · Build your evidence

Turn each achievement into one line: what I did → what changed → why it mattered to the business. Write five lines, then circle your best three.

Illustrative example: Renegotiated our three largest logistics contracts → reduced annual freight cost by 8% → protected margin in a year of rising prices.

What I did	What changed (number, time, quality)	Why it mattered to the business

Step 3 · Set your three numbers

Prepare three numbers and keep two of them to yourself. Your private minimum should come from your BATNA: your best alternative if there is no agreement.

Number	What it means	Base salary	Total package
Opening request	Ambitious, and defensible from your benchmarks and evidence (you say this)		
Target	What you realistically aim to land (private)		
Private minimum	Below this, your alternative is better (private)		

My BATNA (my best alternative if there is no agreement):

There is no universal "ask for X% more" rule. Base your numbers on market data, your evidence and your alternatives.

Step 4 · Prepare one clear request

Write your own words for each part. Put your priority items on the table together, as one proposal.

1. Positive intent
e.g. "I'm very keen on this role."

2. Evidence
Two or three evidence lines plus one market reference

3. Specific request
A precise number or narrow range for what matters most

4. Question
e.g. "How does that compare with what you had in mind?"

5. Pause
Stop talking. Silence is not a concession.

Step 5 · Rehearse out loud

- [ ] I can state a clear amount and pay basis (gross, monthly or annual).
- [ ] I have said my request out loud at least three times.
- [ ] I have rehearsed with someone playing a sceptical manager or recruiter.
- [ ] I can explain my evidence in under a minute.
- [ ] I have an answer to “What are your salary expectations?”, based on market data.
- [ ] I know how to redirect a question about my current salary to the value of the role.
- [ ] I have prepared a question for each objection in step 6.
- [ ] I can pause after my request without lowering it.
- [ ] I know what I will trade, what I won’t, and what I will do if the answer is no.

Step 6 · Diagnose objections before you respond

An objection is information, not a verdict. Prepare a question for each one before the meeting.

What you might hear	A question you could ask	My own question or response
“There’s no budget.”	Is that this year’s budget or the whole package? Which parts are flexible, and when can we look at it again?	
“You’re at the top of the band.”	Do my responsibilities still fit this grade? What would it take to move up, and who decides?	
“We need to see more from you first.”	What specifically would you need to see, by when, and how will it be assessed?	
“Salary is fixed by the collective agreement.”	Which step of the scale would I start at, and what determines that?	
“I need approval.”	What will the decision-maker need to see, and when should we reconnect?	

Step 7 · Evaluate the offer and confirm in writing

Never judge an offer on base salary alone. Compare first-year value with ongoing value, then confirm everything in writing.

Element	What to confirm	First year	Ongoing
Base salary	Gross amount, pay basis, number of payments, holiday allowance		
Variable pay	Guaranteed parts and parts that depend on targets		
One-time payments	Signing or relocation: amount, timing, repayment conditions		
Equity / long-term incentives	Type, vesting schedule, conditions if you leave		
Benefits and conditions	Pension, car or mobility budget, hybrid working, leave, training		
Title and next review	Job title, effective date, date and criteria of the next review		

Look beyond base salary: priorities and trades

Item	My priority (1–5)	Likely cost to employer (low/med/high)	I would trade it for...
Base salary			
Variable pay or bonus			
Signing or relocation payment			
Start date			
Remote or hybrid days			
Training or certification budget			
Title or scope			
Earlier pay review			

My one-page negotiation brief

Bring everything together on this page and take it into the meeting.

Goal of this meeting

My three strongest evidence lines

Market reference (source and date)

Opening request / target / private minimum

My BATNA

Top three priorities in the package

What I can trade

Most likely objection and my question

Close: “Can we confirm this in writing, and agree the next step and date?”

After the meeting

What was agreed

Next step and date

☐ Written confirmation sent or received

This worksheet is general information, not legal or financial advice. Collective agreements and national law take precedence. Version: November 2026.