



Ask Rose and Jamie

Go ahead, have “The Money Talk”

Our reader asks; when is the best time to talk about compensation in the job interview process?

There is a standing joke in the recruitment industry that many people would rather talk about sex, religion or almost anything than discuss their compensation. While data shows that money is often not the key motivation when vetting an opportunity, at some point it is a practical matter that needs to enter into the discussion in order to move the process forward.

If you are asked about your compensation, our opinion is to answer the question honestly without delaying the response. It can be off putting for an employer to hear a candidate skirt the question and state they are prepared to accept pay which would commensurate with their experience or market rate for the position. This is a non-answer, as it is subjective and based on the perceptions of the employer and subject to their compensation philosophy. Plus a candidate profile without compensation data is considered incomplete and could be interpreted as no serious interest. On the other hand, it is also not advisable to enter into salary discussions immediately or imply that conversations that do not begin with addressing this topic are a waste of anyone’s time. Conversations between qualified interested talent and talent acquisition leaders are never a waste of time. At the very least it is an important opportunity to gain valuable information about one another and potentially create a new relationship while keeping in mind the goal of the conversation.

Candidates and employers share similar goals in the interview process. The goal of the interviewer includes three things; to understand what the candidate needs, if the candidate brings an ideal talent solution, and determine the viability of the organization to secure the candidate. The goal of the candidate is quite similar; to understand the needs of the employer, if the employer delivers an ideal employment solution and if there is viability to be hired on favorable terms. The employer and employee will need to know each other’s needs including compensation, in order to determine viability. Compensation discussions can be viewed as an opportunity for the candidate to showcase leadership and communication skills, as well as begin the relationship in a spirit of trust and honesty.

Demonstrating a solid understanding of total rewards (<http://www.spanopratt.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/World-at-Work-Total-Rewards.pdf>) is a good holistic approach.

We've placed many amazing candidates who have decided to make a sector shift and have been in a position to accept salary levels below historic pay. Communicating this compensation information without hesitation when asked and in a logical manner is important. Most leadership positions in any organization require fiduciary discussions and it is advisable for the candidate to address this issue without emotion. So..... when asked please tell.