

Alyssa Harper Helps

The Salary Range Script

Day 11 • Negotiation

Never give your number first - use this script instead

Key Takeaways:

- Ask "What's the budgeted range for this position?" before revealing expectations
- Use the 3-part deflection script when pressured for your number
- Anchor high by asking for the top 25% of any range they provide

Here's the brutal truth: When companies ask "What are your salary expectations?" they're trying to underpay you. They want you to lowball yourself so they can offer the minimum and call it fair.

Stop falling for this trap. The company already has a budget - they know exactly what they can pay. There's zero reason you should reveal your hand first when they're holding all the cards.

I'm giving you the exact script that's helped my clients increase their offers by an average of \$12,000. This isn't theory - it's a battle-tested framework that works.

****Step 1: The Redirect Question**** When they ask about salary expectations, immediately respond: "I'd love to learn more about the role first. What's the budgeted range for this position?"

This puts the ball back in their court. You're not being difficult - you're being smart. Most companies will give you the range when asked directly.

****Step 2: The Deflection Script (If They Push Back)**** If they insist you go first, use this exact script: "I'm sure you have a fair range in mind based on the role's responsibilities and market rates. I'm more interested in finding the right fit - if we're aligned there, I'm confident we can work out the compensation details."

This shows you're reasonable while maintaining your position. You're not playing hardball, you're playing smart.

****Step 3: The Strategic Anchor**** Once they give you a range (let's say \$70K-\$85K), don't immediately accept it. Instead, say: "The role sounds exciting. Based on my experience with [specific relevant skill], I was thinking closer to the \$80-\$90K range. Is there flexibility there?"

You've just anchored 25% higher than their top number. Even if they can't meet \$90K, you've positioned yourself to land at \$85K instead of the \$75K they probably hoped to pay.

****Step 4: The Documentation Move**** Whatever number you discuss, follow up with an email: "Thanks for our conversation. Just to confirm, we discussed a salary range of \$X-\$Y for the position. Looking forward to next steps."

This prevents any "misunderstandings" later and shows you're detail-oriented.

****Step 5: The Package Expansion**** If they claim the salary is "non-negotiable," expand the conversation: "I understand the base salary has constraints. Can we discuss the full compensation package? I'm interested in professional development budget, flexible work arrangements, and performance bonuses."

Remember: 87% of people who negotiate their salary get some form of increase, but only 37% actually try. You're already ahead of most candidates just by using this script.

Your homework: Practice this script out loud three times before your next interview. Confidence comes from preparation, and preparation comes from practice.

Stop giving your power away in salary conversations. You have more leverage than you think - now you know how to use it.