



Why Negotiate?

The course opens with a lesson on the importance of negotiation in professional life and why it should be second nature for developers.

“In business, you don’t get what you deserve, you get what you negotiate.” – Chester L. Karrass

Tech jobs pay a lot these days. Competent tech workers, such as Software Engineers, Engineering Managers, Designers, Program Managers, Product Managers, and the like, are in high demand. At the time of this writing, an entry-level US-based software engineer at Google, Facebook, Microsoft, or other similar top tech company, makes anywhere between \$120K to \$250K in total annual compensation. While an engineer with ten to fifteen years of industry experience, in those companies, can command between \$300K and upwards of a million US dollars in total annual compensation.



These figures are mind-numbing, especially given that in 2018 the median salary stood at roughly \$33,706 in the United States. How can such a large variance in compensation exist for professionals - even those with the same number of years of experience and relatively similar skill sets? There are many factors involved in this puzzle - career velocity, school, company, title/position, stock appreciation, luck, negotiation skills, etc. - to name but a few. Granted, an individual who works the same job better than another can

command a higher salary. But more often than not, you will come across individuals with roughly the same skill set and competency being paid vastly different amounts of money for the same job.



One factor that consistently contributes to some people's ability to make more money than their peers, while all else being equal, is their ability to negotiate compensation with their prospective, or even current, employer. In fact, negotiation is a crucial skill for survival in today's corporate world, often formally taught and researched at business schools.

Most of us suck at the all-important life-skill of negotiating. Labor unions exist because the majority of individuals are simply not good negotiators. We need others to negotiate on our behalf, and joining a union served us well until we became software engineers. Unfortunately, tech workers don't have the luxury of unions. Each person is out there themselves. In fact, tech companies go to great lengths to keep any form of unionizing off their campus which in turn helps keep their financial bottom-lines chubby.

The stakes are high in today's world of technology. There's a lot of money being pushed around by big tech, and you do not want to leave tens of thousands of dollars on the table. The stereotype of tech workers is that of a bespectacled shy nerd with limited social skills, and that may very well be true to an extent. Without training in negotiation, we techies cannot match up to the sweet-talking and well-oiled recruitment machinery of tech companies that bears upon us with all the tricks up its sleeve.

In this course, we will discuss the common pressure-tactics and strategies used by employers to make naive software engineers accept low-ball offers and how one can avoid settling for less than what one is truly worth in the

market. We will narrate real-life examples and make suggestions on how to propose counter-offers, handle multiple offers, negotiate without competing offers, request raises or refresher RSUs at your current job, among a host of other issues confronted as a software engineer when switching jobs and negotiating with potential employers. This course should put you on an even playing field and result in a win-win situation for both you and your new employer. After all, a financially satisfied and content employee is highly productive and motivated to stick with the employer for the long term.

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