

EAA Engineer Career Planning Seminar Part II

Craig Pessetto, ES3

During this seminar Mr. Pessetto gave a presentation regarding job offer negotiations. After his presentation the other engineers answered questions about how and when to negotiate and what to look for when we are considering a job offer. There weren't many things that I felt like I learned because most of their advice was not very specific. For example, one student asked, "how do I know if an offer is a good offer?" which is a question that I was hoping to have answered for myself but the alumni said something to the extent of, "it just depends" and it was frustrating to not have real numbers to compare possible offers to. Mr. Pessetto mentioned in his presentation that while it's appropriate to negotiate and try to get a better offer, most companies will already be offering you the best offer according to your title and experience. While I believe this, there are also companies that do not intend to give you the most fair offer and I was curious to learn how to know if I am being offered something fair or if the company is deceiving me but I remain unsatisfied.

One key thing that I learned is that it is appropriate to ask to speak with someone who I would potentially work closely with. At a previous job, I learned after a month or so that the person who were interviewing me were somewhat disconnected from the position that I would be filling and unintentionally mislead me when it came to what was expected of me. Another key piece of advice was to not only look at salary but to take into account other benefits like paid time off, medical insurance, investment opportunities, etc.

Knowing what I know now, I am going to ask to speak with someone who is more familiar with the position that I will be filling so I can have a better understanding of what's expected of me. I will also ask about the benefits they offer and not just be concerned with the salary.

This activity would have been more helpful if I was given specific examples of what a good salary is for a starting chemical engineer in various states or what a typical benefits package looks like etc. A lot of what they were saying was not helpful to me because they were lessons that I have already learned from previous interviews and jobs. It would also have been helpful to learn more specifically about negotiating like what things should I say, what should I avoid, and specifically how should I approach the task. A role-play example would have been helpful as well so that my first real job offer isn't the first time I'm exposed to that scenario.