FearlessSalaryNegotiation.com

Word-for-word Scripts to Answer the "What's Your Current or Expected Salary?" Question

These scripts will help you answer the uncomfortable interview question "What's your current or expected salary?"

The scripts are also available in email format for easy reference.

Learn more about this question, why you should not share this information, and how to avoid it:

FearlessSalaryNegotiation.com/the-dreaded-salary-question/

Josh Doody

The Scripts and Email templates

The answer to "What's your current or expected salary?"

What to say when they ask *again*

What to say when they *insist*

Your trump card to end the conversation

Job application suggestions

Standard scripts

These four scripts should get you past this question for most recruiters and hiring managers.

Start with the first answer and work your way down if they continue asking for your current or expected salary.

Standard scripts

The answer to "What's your current or expected salary?"

What to say when they ask *again*

What to say when they *insist*

Your trump card

The answer to "What's your current or expected salary?"

Use when the recruiter or hiring manager initially asks for your current or expected salary.

"I'm not comfortable sharing my current salary. I would prefer to focus on the value I can add to this company rather than what I'm paid at my current job. I don't have a specific number in mind for a desired salary, and you know better than I do what value my skillset and experience could bring to your company. I want this move to be a big step forward for me in terms of both responsibility and compensation."

When they ask *again*

Use when the recruiter or hiring manager doesn't accept your first answer.

"I'm just not comfortable discussing my current or expected salary. I prefer to focus on the value I can add in this position, and I look forward to hearing what you think is appropriate."

When they *insist*

Use when they *insist*. If they're even close to your expectations, you can confirm by saying, "Sure, I think that's in the ballpark."

"It sounds like you're trying to qualify me for a salary range. If you want to tell me what that range is, I'm happy to tell you if it's in the ballpark."

Your trump card

Use when they simply refuse to accept no for
an answer.

"I'm not comfortable sharing my current employer's proprietary compensation information, and I know they wouldn't appreciate it if I did. I still work for them, and I'm just not comfortable sharing their proprietary information about how they pay people like me. I really don't have a specific number in mind for an expected salary, and I look forward to hearing what you suggest."

Email templates

Here are the scripts as email templates, so you can respond in writing if the request comes through email.

These are also presented in order of escalation from the first request through the final request, where you would play your trump card.

Email templates

The answer to "What's your current or expected salary?"

What to say when they ask *again*

What to say when they *insist*

When they offer a ballpark range

Your trump card

The answer to "What's your current or expected salary?"

Use when the recruiter or hiring manager initially asks for your current or expected salary. This template is segmented so you can easily choose to send only the "current salary" response, the "expected salary" response, or both.

To: [Recruiter]

Subject: Re: Job opening

Hi [Recruiter name]

I'm not really comfortable sharing my current salary. I would prefer to focus on the value I can add at [Company name] rather than what I'm paid at my current job.

I don't have a specific number in mind for my expected salary, and you know better than I do what value my skillset and experience could bring to [Company name].

I want this move to be a big step forward for me in terms of both responsibility and compensation and I look forward to learning more about this opportunity.

If you need anything else, just let me know!

[Your name]
[Your email address]

When they *insist*

Use when they insist. If they're even close to your expectations, you can confirm by saying, "Sure, I think that's in the ballpark."

To: [Recruiter]

Subject: Re: Job opening

Hi [Recruiter name]

It sounds like you're trying to qualify me for a salary range. If you have a range in mind, I'm happy to tell you if it's in the ballpark.

[Your name]
[Your email address]

When they offer a ballpark range

To: [Recruiter]

Subject: Re: Job opening

Hi [Recruiter name]

That seems pretty reaonable and I look forward to evaluating that range in the context of the other compensation details and benefits if we move forward together later on.

Thanks for your time!

[Your name]
[Your email address]

When they ask again

Use when the recruiter or hiring manager doesn't
accept your first answer.

To: [Recruiter]

Subject: Re: Job opening

Hi [Recruiter name]

I'm just not comfortable discussing my current or expected salary. I prefer to focus on
the value I can add in this position at [Company name], and I look forward to hearing
what you think is appropriate.

If you need anything else, just let me know!

[Your name]
[Your email address]

Your trump card

Use when they simply refuse to accept no for an answer.

To: [Recruiter]

Subject: Re: Job opening

Hi [Recruiter name]

I understand this information could be useful, but I'm just not comfortable sharing my current employer's proprietary compensation information, and I know they wouldn't appreciate it if I did.

I still work for them, and I'm just not comfortable sharing their proprietary information about how they pay people like me. I really don't have a specific number in mind for an expected salary, and I look forward to hearing what you suggest.

If you need anything else, just let me know!

[Your name]
[Your email address]

Job Application Suggestions

Here are some ways to avoid sharing your current and expected salary information when submitting job applications on paper and online.

Job Application Suggestions

- Leave salary history and expected salary questions blank whenever possible

- (Online) Sometimes the field appears to be required, but you might be able to submit it with the field blank

- (Online) If you can't leave it blank, try submitting fake numbers like "0" or "99999999999" or even "N/A"

- When those methods are insufficient, a person (recruiter or hiring manager) will often reach out for clarification—that's when you can revert to the scripts in this document. Example:

> **RECRUITER**: "I noticed you left the Current Salary and Expected Salary fields blank on your application. Could you please complete those?"
>
> **YOU RESPOND**: "I'm not comfortable sharing my current salary. I would prefer to focus on the value I can add to this company rather than what I'm paid at my current job. I don't have a specific number in mind for a desired salary, and you know better than I do what value my skillset and experience could bring to your company. I want this move to be a big step forward for me in terms of both responsibility and compensation."

Start getting paid what you're worth

FEARLESS
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A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE
TO GETTING PAID
WHAT YOU'RE WORTH

JOSH DOODY
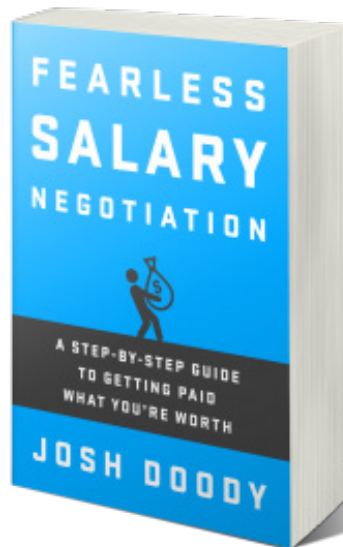
"I made an additional $8,000 in base salary and landed a better job thanks to the interview and salary negotiation strategies I learned from *Fearless Salary Negotiation*! Now I can do more boring things like save for retirement, and fun things like travel more."

– Jared Allen, Senior Software Developer