Salary Negotiation

It is important that you understand the specifics of your salary and benefits when accepting a position. Employers generally discuss salaries when they are interested in offering you a job. If the employer has not specified salary at the time the offer is made, it is appropriate to inquire. It is best not to begin discussing salaries at the first interview. Ideally, the employer should bring up this subject. The keys to successfully arriving at a salary mutually agreeable to you and the employer are:

1. Knowing Yourself and Your Needs
List all your anticipated monthly expenses. Be sure to include transportation, new wardrobe, change in rent, professional memberships, etc. Check the cost of living in the area where you will reside.

2. Research Current Salaries and Benefits
It is good to be aware of the current salary range for positions you are seeking. Some employers may ask you what salary you will be willing to accept. To research current salaries in your field of interest, review a recent past job listing in the "National Association of Colleges and Employers Salary Survey" at Career Services. Understand that in addition to salary, compensation may include benefits such as health and dental insurance, sick and vacation leave, as well as profit sharing. Remember, benefits increase your earnings (especially where profit sharing or bonuses are involved). Many employers have regularly scheduled salary increases, commissions and bonuses, educational reimbursements, travel expenses, etc.

3. Discussing Salary With the Employer
If the salary offered does not meet your personal needs or is not competitive with similar positions you have researched, you may politely explain this to the employer and ask the employer to review the offer. Be sure to clearly state your reasons. Most employers have a salary range in mind and many employers are not allowed to negotiate.