

Evaluating Job Offers

Determine the merits of the position, the organizational culture/environment/fit, the offer itself (salary and benefits), any personal impact, as well as impact on long-term career growth.

The Position

Do you like it? In your gut, are you *looking forward to* learning and working this job?

Does this job allow you to *use your best skills* and those you most enjoy using?

Do you know what you do best? Did you communicate this in the interview?

Would there be other places in the organization where you could use these skills?

Is the *level of Responsibility* consistent with what you want and need?

Do you like the *clients/customers* or whomever you would be serving/working with whatever?

You will be expected to bring or develop certain knowledges - what are they? Does the thought of working all day, using those knowledges, excite you? Interest you? Bore you?

Will you be provided regularly, with *training* and professional development opportunities?

Bottom Line: can you be happy doing this every day?

The Organization

Evaluate the financial condition of the organization.

- Publicly held companies make financial statements available through their Annual Report.
- Smaller, private companies may provide only what information you glean from your interview and relevant conversations with staff.
- Ask professionals in the industry about the company and its "health". Read business publications; find articles where this organization is mentioned.

Do you support their primary activity? (product, service) Are your values in line?

"Settling for a job at a place you secretly despise is going to do a tap dance on your psyche and on your conscience."

Do you think you can work well with your supervisor? Do you have a good feeling about them? Do you 'connect'?

How do you feel about the prospective co-workers you met? Do you know how closely you will be working with certain people? Did you like them?

What is your space like? Was it a closet at one time? Can you be productive there? Is it a physically pleasant environment?

The Offer

Does the salary seem to be in line with similar positions in similar-sized companies/organizations?

What types of salary increases or bonuses are offered? Merit or Cost-of-Living?

How often will you be evaluated?

If receiving commissions, would the smallest commission be able to meet your minimum living expenses?

Does the benefits package give you adequate health coverage based on your current needs? Is it inclusive? Dental, health, vision?

Are there multiple health plan choices?

How much are you expected to pay out of pocket for health insurance?

Is a medical reimbursement account available?

Vacation? Comp Time? Flex time scheduling?

Retirement fund? 401(k)?

How generous and attractive are the perks? Free meals? Parking? Laptop & PDA? Tuition Reimbursement? Company car or mileage reimbursement? Stock options?

Personal Lifestyle

Will taking this job require you to make any major changes to your life? Really early or late start time? Work weekends? More than 40 hours a week? Travel?

If you don't move, will this bring you a killer commute? If so, can you move or car-pool or take a bus?

Will this have a negative affect on your personal / social life?

"The world of work is littered with the bodies of burned-out people who thought they could endure a killer pace or a killer commute."

Career Impact

How does this job fit with your overall career goals? Is it a logical stepping-stone? Will it provide skills and background that will be helpful in moving forward?

Are you interested enough in the industry that you want to learn and grow in it?

What is the career ladder like? Are there opportunities for advancement within the organization?

What will this job prepare you for, i.e. where could you be in five years?

SUMMARY

“Salary isn’t the bottom line in evaluating a job. The bottom line is whether or not you use your skills in a good setting where you can do your most effective work, serving the people you like to serve, working with enjoyable co-workers in a place that honors your value system and leaves you time for a life outside of work.”

Acknowledgements

- Quotes and some content from “Should you take the Job?” by Richard Nelson Bolles
- Some content from Monster.com Salary Center article, “Assessing a Job Offer” by Max Messmer