

- **BE PREPARED.** You need to be informed and ready to have the conversation as soon as you apply. The employer could bring up the salary and benefits conversation as early as a first phone call or as late as the last interview. Be ready for it.
  - If you're applying for somewhere that lists the pay range as "Dependant on Qualifications/Experience," be ready for them to ask you what you made at your last job. Decide in advance if you want to discuss it, or if you'd like to focus on what you need to earn in this job.
  
- **BUT HOW?** Determine what you need, what you want, and the difference between them (which is where you're likely to end up).
  - Consider not just a flat salary, but benefits as well - paid time off, bonuses, commissions, profit-sharing, flexible hours, professional development, annual wage increases, transportation funds, etc.
  - Recognize your own value. You have the most power *before* you accept the job.
  - Review the organization's finances. 990s contain some salary information that should at least give you a basis.
  
- **HERE WE GO!** Once the conversation has started:
  - Look for a win-win outcome: the employer gets something they want, the employee gets something they want.
  - Consider opportunities for future negotiation and propose them.
  - Take the long view. Will the issue be important in 6 months or 3 years?
  - **DO NOT LIE.** Just don't. Assume your prospective employers will fact check you.
  
- **BUT I ALREADY SAID YES.** Negotiation can happen at any time!
  - Don't wait for your employer to bring up salary/benefit negotiations. They might not ever do it.
  - Once you have more information, you can leverage it. "Now that I am managing X, I'd like to discuss increasing my salary to \$Y to reflect the added responsibilities."
  - If they offer future potential money, get that in writing, preferably in your contract.