

# Career Guru

DO YOU HAVE A CAREER DILEMMA? WE HAVE SOME OF LONDON'S TOP RECRUITERS ANSWERING YOUR PROBLEMS.

Dear Career Guru...

I've been offered a new job, which I really want but the pay offer they've made me is a bit less than I had hoped for. It's quite important that I do get some sort of pay rise - the reason for leaving my last job was that I hadn't had a proper raise in 2 years.

I'm not sure what to do. Should I ask for more before I start the job? Do you think they might withdraw the offer? Plus I've never negotiated for more pay - what's the best way to go about doing this?

Neena, London

Career Guru Says...

You would be surprised how many times this subject comes up and it is always a difficult one to deal with. My advice is to try and find out as much information as possible about salary and package before applying for a job. If you are going through an agency, then you should ask the consultant in question for a detailed breakdown. If you are responding to a direct advert, it may be harder to find out the information you need.

If the salary advertised does not meet your expectations but you like the sound of the job, then you can send through an application stating this with reasons why you are looking for a higher salary - this maybe down to your current remuneration. This will go a long way to getting rid of a sticky negotiation process in the latter stages.

In your case Neena, where you have been offered the job, the key point is that you want to accept but at a higher salary. Your reasons behind this are understandable and the question is to what extent are you willing to jeopardise the offer by asking for more money.

Simply, each company is different and to an extent it depends on a number of key criteria; e.g. the added value you can bring to the company; the structure of the organisation - many of the larger firms have strict salary levels that new appointments must fall into, also, is there a back-up candidate happy to accept the offer?

If you are going through an agency, you must take their advice and it is their job as the intermediary to carry out negotiations on your behalf. Presuming this is a position that has been offered directly, you must ask yourself one question - is the salary so important that if they don't budge, will I decline the offer? If you ask yourself this, you will know how far you are willing to negotiate. Remember, there are things to look at in addition to the salary - you can ask for a review in 6 months; you can ask for additional benefits; maybe, you can suggest they pay you a bonus if you prove yourself over the next year. There are plenty of ways to negotiate without putting yourself into a corner.

A client will typically only withdraw an offer if you can't come to an agreement on salary or package, but the most common scenario is that you will put in a request, they will respond and you will have the opportunity to accept or decline the final offer.

Dear Career Guru...

One of my colleagues keeps taking credit for my work. I've found a number of times that she's told my boss that she worked on projects, which I'd done myself or taken credit for ideas that were mine. It means that she always gets the best jobs as he thinks she's really great. I don't want to get into a fight in front of my boss but I don't know how to stop her doing this or to make it clear which ideas are mine. Any ideas how I can sort this out?

James, Sussex

Career Guru Says...

Firstly, look at this positively - at least your boss likes your ideas, even though he/she thinks they are someone else's! Seriously though, this does happen and here is the solution. You will need to sit down with your colleague and discuss the situation, identifying examples where she has taken credit for your projects and the reasons behind doing this. There may be a simple misunderstanding or miscommunication that has caused this problem. If not, I would make it very plain that if the problem reoccurs, then you will have no option but to speak to your boss and resolve the situation that way.

If it comes to it, you must set up a meeting with your boss to explain the situation and how you tried to rectify the problem before alerting him/her. It is imperative that you have examples to hand of where your colleague has taken credit for your work. The intention should be to walk out of the meeting with a gameplan of how the situation will be sorted out and your boss should be able to get to the bottom of it quickly and effectively. In addition, you may be able to suggest a better system to your boss - for instance, any projects or new ideas you come up with should be e-mailed to the relevant person in your company with your boss copied in.

Finally, don't think that you are being petty about approaching your colleague and maybe your boss on this - it is crucial that people are rewarded in the work place for good work and your boss will understandably only reward the person he/she think is doing the best work.

Our Career Guru this month is David Morel, managing director at Tiger Recruitment Ltd.

Do you have a career dilemma? Then head to [Secsess.com](http://Secsess.com) and click on contact us. Use the comment box to vent your feelings and then hit Submit. Look out for the answer to all your problems in the next issue of Secsess. (Please specify if you want to remain anonymous. And sorry, Career Guru cannot enter into personal correspondence.)

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