



career guide

evaluating job offers

ASU Career Services offers a comprehensive on-line Career Guide designed to help you evaluate career options, learn about internships and launch your career. The Career Guide includes detailed information about cover letters and resumes, interviewing, business etiquette, portfolios, graduate school admission processes, effective job and internship search strategies and more. Visit the Career Guide at asu.edu/careerguide.

After all of your hard work, you have received a job offer! You now have an important decision to make, and it's about a lot more than just salary and benefits. Consider important criteria when determining whether or not you'll accept a job offer.

Step 1: Analyzing Specific Job Situations

A critical part of evaluating an offer is to gain as much information as possible about the specific job situation. Begin by looking at this from three different perspectives: The Position, The Organization, The Industry.

The Position

- Daily tasks: routine or project oriented
- Degree of independence
- Opportunity to learn new skills
- Opportunity to apply academic training
- Exposure to outstanding colleagues
- Hours: both stated and expected
- Criteria used to evaluate you
- Personalities of supervisors/colleagues
- Values of supervisors/colleagues (e.g. family)
- Opportunity for travel
- Pressure and pace of work
- Fit of position with long term goals
- Transferability of skills after 2 or 3 years
- Opportunity for growth/ career development

The Organization

- Organization's mission/goals
- Technological innovation
- High investment
- Quality of products and services
- Management style/quality
- Profitability/stability
- Corporate culture
- Importance of your division/team to the organization as a whole
- How individuals in the department and/or company communicate with each other
- Opportunity for advancement
- Commitment to professional growth
- Reputation and image of company
- Integrity/ethics/company values
- Future of company/products
- Stable (satisfied) customer/client base

The Industry

- Growth history/future
- Market trends
- Dependence on the business cycle
- Dependence on government policies/programs

Step 2: Understanding the Climate or Culture of the Organization and Your Lifestyle Choices

The climate or culture of the company is the set of conditions that reflect the values and attitudes that drive company policy (or daily operations). It is the “personality” of the company. Here are some factors to consider that will help you understand if this company culture is one in which you will fit, and if the lifestyle provided through this position is one with which you will be comfortable:

Contribution

- Develop an understanding of the level of participation allowed in decisions that affect the department and the company.
- Develop an understanding of your ability to speak up.
- Find out about opportunities for career growth.
- Does the company encourage new ideas?
- Is there recognition for special achievement?

Office Personality

- Demeanor of people in the company
- Company bulletin boards/work site
- Noise level of work area
- What type of people have seniority/leadership positions.
- Check into training and professional development opportunities.
- Be aware of how you are treated during the second interview.
- Ask for a copy of a company newsletter.

Lifestyle

- Proximity to graduate schools
- Cost of living
- Recreational/cultural opportunities
- Employment opportunities for spouse/partner
- Proximity to family and friends
- Commuting distance/costs
- Long-term professional and personal prospects for self/spouse/partner
- Child daycare options

Step 3: Assessing the Economic Stability of the Organization and the Salary/Benefit Package

Determining whether a company is financially stable is an important part of your evaluation process. It will also help you evaluate both the monetary and non-monetary aspects of the financial package being offered.

Organizational Strength

- Ask for a copy of the company annual report.
- Check trade journals and other publications.
- Is the company public or private?
- Is the company driven by research and development or is it cost driven?
- Is there an opportunity to buy into the company?
- What is the turn-over attrition rate?

Compensation and Benefits

- Salary/bonuses
- Evaluations/reviews
- Medical/dental benefits
- Retirement plan
- Company holidays/sick leave
- Life insurance
- Stock options
- Relocation expenses
- Educational benefit