

Work Creatively Career Advisors Inc.
Canada's systematic career success process
The CAREER EQUITY© LETTER

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September's Tip: UNDERPAID? HERE'S HOW TO FIX IT

Welcome again to your couple-minute career management tipsheet.

Every other month in a short read we give you one practical career-improvement technique that you can go out and apply.

First, THANK YOU to these people who recently referred others to us.

Morganna Kelly, Lois Tupper, Becky Jones,
Lorraine McCallum, Rhonda Page, Eleanor Baker

It's a pleasure to help readers' friends.

"GET THINGS MOVING MEETING"

Here's how to help anyone who mentions they're stuck on a tough career or income challenge. In one meeting we will pinpoint the cause of their challenge and build that person's plan to move things forward. If someone you know wants more out of their job, career search, earnings or self employment, this private meeting is a practical solution. You or they are invited to call Mary-Frances at 416 922 4476.

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THE TIP:
UNDERPAID? HERE'S HOW TO FIX IT

Few of us work for the money -- really we each work to contribute, care or create. But life's far easier with money as you've no doubt noticed. Salary negotiations are a tool for reaching your career and life goals while being of real worth to your employer.

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- Janice, a web architect, so impressed the recruiter in how she handled her screening interview, they put her forward at top rate, when she'd only earned the mid range before.
- After a short campaign, Martin, a designer, landed a position paying two and a half times more than his old job, and then secured another substantial raise within a month.
- John, an IT project manager, explained the responsibility level he thought was necessary to do a good job, and the comp he wanted for that, and the company said no we can't do that. Then he got a call from this employer not long after, offering him the job just the way he saw it. He's happily performing for them now, the way he wanted to.
- Sunila, a researcher, funded her own Masters striving for career advancement, but afterwards was still getting paid the same as her BSc. coworkers. She left and recouped the double digit total cost of her MSc. when she was the top candidate chosen by a new company.

* All client names have been changed for confidentiality.

How'd these people go so far? They negotiated! At various stages in their campaigns, these people used a string of good practices that created the bargaining power to negotiate at the end. In fact, you pave the way for top possible dollar – or forfeit your chance to negotiate for it —from the moment the employer hears of you.

If you haven't been getting paid what you're worth, a system of good research, careful preparation, and a firm presentation to the hiring decision maker can add thousands of dollars to your paycheck.

Secretaries through CEOs can do this. So why doesn't everyone? I think square one stops them. People are generally taught to "avoid confrontation," as they fear being seen as "pushy" or "aggressive." But just answering interviewers' salary questions doesn't net you their best available offer.

You need to expect that negotiating with your current or new employer might not "feel good" during the process. That's okay, negotiate anyway. You won't be rejected. You'll be respected and valued more. Without a system and strategy for thinking and talking salary, you're likely leaving money on the table, money the employer is happy to increase if you ask in the right way for your situation.

Those who don't negotiate and do it well not only miss the immediate gain of a higher salary when they are initially hired, but also get hurt in the long run. This is because annual raises are often based on a small percentage of current earnings. A 29-year-old who accepts a \$50K salary offer instead of negotiating it back for a mere \$10K more, \$60K, could lose \$500,000 over her career.

Equally frustrating is the impact of low pay on self-confidence, attitude, and positioning for future promotion. Here's what happened to Cynthia. She was a superstar in her department at the company where she had worked for five years. She got the tough assignments, and masterfully completed them one after another. All was going well in her job and career until one day, a coworker somehow obtained a list of the salaries of everyone in the department and passed it around the office. Cynthia was dumbfounded when she noticed that a man who been hired a few months ago at her same level was earning \$10,000 more than Cynthia-for doing much less work!

Cynthia soon told us, "That day, I lost all motivation for the job. After that, I just went through the motions." She was no longer the office superstar, and became a prime candidate for a layoff and career downfall. Fortunately, she started working on a job move before she suffered the consequences of the decline in her performance.

It took a lot of work to overcome her reluctance to ask for what she's worth. We told her that when people develop their negotiating skills, their work is valued more than when they just accept whatever is offered. Even if they can't pay you more right now, they'll show respect for your value in other ways.

Here's a bit of what we had Cynthia and others like the people at the start of this article do:

- First, know that companies "lowball" but don't mind you asking for more money. It signals them that you must be in demand and the best choice.
- Second, do the homework. Find out what people are getting paid for comparable work. Call us for a source of salary information for your field or the one you want to enter.
- Third, prepare and skill-build as a self-advocate so you get the bargaining power. You can set up the right circumstances for negotiation. If your timing and mindset are right, you can land a pay package that reflects the value of what you'll achieve for the company -- the level pay you want and need.

To sound natural, to know how to politely tease more dollars out and when to stop, use a career coach familiar with salary negotiation. Although Cynthia nearly had a heart attack while we practiced her in being a better negotiator, the next week she did quite well.

She protested, as you might too, "But I've never done such a thing. Aren't I being ungrateful? What if they get mad at me and rescind their offer?"

Well, guess what?

She was floored when they agreed to a \$5,000 course-fee reimbursement, and starting pay of \$14,000 above their initial offer. Like many underpaid people, Cynthia found out that she could actually do salary negotiation and have her bosses be just fine with it. Now, 8 months later, she's negotiating a promotion.

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If your friend or contact is having a career or income challenge, they may benefit from a professional view on why it's happening and what actions will shift it. Tell them there is immediate relief in one meeting. Our initial "Career Move Action Plan " meeting pinpoints the cause of any individual's career situation and gives a practical plan to resolve it. Have them call Mary-Frances, 416 922 4476 to see if a CMAP would be right for them.
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BOAT CRUISE WINNERS

At our lively 5th anniversary party June 13 (100 people turned out despite a sudden rainstorm) MFF's presentation was "**What do Canoes and Cafes have to do with your Career?**" -- tips on how moving from reverie to active communication makes a wished-for career move get actually done, finished, here, real, complete.

Six people won the draw for a Cruise of Toronto Harbour and Islands. Winners AB, BG, MM, ML, PV and RP got together aboard a private motorboat for cocktails and dinner with Karen, Mary-Frances and Captain Pat. Winners were entrepreneurs, consultants, interactive and creative pros and we had a lot of laughs being together. Thank you to everyone for making our anniversary party and cruise two wonderful evenings in our busiest summer ever.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Founder of Career Equity © Mary-Frances Fox lends her expertise to associations of high-achieving businesspeople and professionals in all fields. If your group would be interested in a career topic for a conference or monthly meeting, please inquire.

ABOUT US

Karen Essex, Senior Career Advisor

Karen joined the firm in April. She is the first professional trained in the innovative Work Creatively Career Equity(c) model and processes. She is a gifted intuitive listener, guide, organizer and strategist. Twice a client, Karen brings 13 years experience as a writer, marketing communications consultant, psychotherapist and business owner.

Mary-Frances Fox, Founder

