

## Should You Include Your Salary in the Resume and/or Cover Letter?

Should you include or omit your salary history or desired salary amount in the resumes or cover letter? The answer is a resounding “No!” unless the job advertisement makes it clear the resume will be rejected if it does not include the salary amounts. But even then, if the job announcement merely asks that it be included, but doesn’t indicate a penalty for omission, then don’t include the information.

The fact is that studies show **85 percent** of people surveyed indicated the job applicants would still be called for an interview if they are otherwise qualified. The remaining **15 percent** that say they would probably not call, still leave room for changing their minds. In that case, if you have not included the salary history or salary requirements, you will have a lot more leverage during **salary negotiations** since you are not locked in to an amount.

### *Give Yourself the Advantage*

Including salary information in your resume or cover letter can leave you at a **disadvantage**. If you state a figure that is lower than what the position pays then you have marked yourself as **cheap**. If your figure is too high, then you could be viewed as being **too expensive**. In other words, your salary figures could create a false first impression that can make it more likely your resume will be bypassed.

So what should you do if the employer has specifically requested salary information? There are several options.

- Include a salary range such as, *“Over the course of my career I have earned between \$35,000 and \$50,000 for various positions. My most recent earnings are representative of the amount of responsibility I have assumed and my contributions to the success of my employer. I am sure your company pays a competitive salary based on the position requirements, and I will be pleased to discuss financial issues during the interview.”*
- State your salary requirements in a range such as, *“I am hoping to earn \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year. But I am certainly open to discussing compensation amounts and have a great deal of flexibility.”*
- State your salary information in very general terms like, *“I have been in the mid-\$50,000 range. I am looking for a salary that meets industry and area compensation standards for this type of position.”*
- Don’t state your salary information but mention benefits such as, *“I am flexible as to salary because benefits are just as important. I would be happy to discuss both.”*

### *Avoiding Misunderstandings*

If you absolutely must state your salary history or salary requirements, make sure you differentiate between **salary** and **benefits** like **bonus pay** or **healthcare coverage**. You don’t want to get your resume rejected because your salary requirements are misconstrued as being too high when they included benefit figures. And you should not state any **salary requirements** until you do a lot of **market research**. It is important to find out what the industry is paying and what positions like the one you are applying for are paid in the area where the job is located. **Geography** has a big impact on salaries paid.

When you do supply salary history, you should not include details of earnings by employer. This is considered to be confidential information. You should also not include salary details on a separate piece of paper because of confidentiality but also because it gives money too much prominence before the interview even starts.

You want to get an opportunity to interview where your **winning personality** makes you more likely to land the job. There is plenty of time to discuss the salary issues during the interview or after a job offer is made and you have not yet accepted.

Check out the article *“How Do I Negotiate a Salary?”* for information that will be helpful for when you are asked questions about salary within the interview.

*Regal Resumes has a Mock Interview Package where you can practice talking about your salary expectations with a Certified Employment Interview Professional. Check out our services page to find out more information.*