Assessing a Job Offer

Before you accept an offer, you need to determine the merits of the offer itself, including long-term career growth, salary and benefits. It will be important to evaluate the financial state of the company. You may have to do some research using the Internet to gain insight into the company's recent financial performance. With smaller, private companies, you may have to base your assessment on what you learned when you were being interviewed or ask professionals in the industry for their opinions of the company.

In order to assess it properly divide the proposal into three different components:
- The job itself
- Career implications
- Salary, perks and benefits

Take a closer look at each component and ask yourself the following questions as you assess the job offer:

The job itself:

- Do the actual tasks that are to be performed daily appeal to you?
- Are you likely to find this job (and the industry) challenging after a few months or a year?
- Is the level of responsibility consistent with what you want and need in order to do the job effectively?
- Are the working conditions reasonably pleasant and conducive to quality work?
- Do you think you'll enjoy working with your supervisor and coworkers?
- Will taking this job obligate you to make any major change in your life-style (more traveling, longer hours, a longer commute, etc.) that could have an impact on your quality of life?

Career implications:

- How does this job fit into your overall plan? Will it enable you to move forward with your career goals?
- How interested are you in the company's business or industry?
- What are the career prospects in this industry or business likely to be in five years?

The salary, benefits and perks:

- Is the compensation package (including what you're likely to earn in bonuses and commissions, if applicable) high enough to cover your basic living expenses?
- Is the compensation package competitive with what other companies in this field are paying for similar work?
- How does this package compare to the income you're currently earning or were earning in your last job?
- Does the benefits package give you adequate health coverage, based on your current needs? What percentage of the benefits package (if any) will you be expected to pay for in the event that you're hired?
- How generous and attractive are the perks (assuming that the company is offering perks such as a company car, tuition reimbursement, vacation and stock options, etc.)?