

HOW TO PERSUADE HIRING MANAGERS TO OFFER A FLAT SALARY

Summary: *Learn how to persuade hiring managers to offer you a flat salary when you've previously been working on commissions.*



Question: I work in sales with a financial-services firm, and I've spent a lot of time researching other segments of this industry to move into. Assuming that I eventually get interviews in other areas, what's the best way to convince hiring managers that I'm willing to accept a flat salary when I've worked exclusively on commissions my entire career? My research shows that I'll earn less initially in the positions I'm targeting, but that the new job will be more lucrative for the long haul. I'm willing to take two steps back to move five steps ahead, but I'm concerned that hiring managers won't want to talk to me since I'll be taking a pay cut to make the move. I've been screened out by this obstacle in the past. Any ideas?

Answer: The most common approach is to deflate the amount you've been earning in commissions to match the base salary of the positions you're targeting. It's a lie, but it's among the most-often told among career changers. A stronger tactic is to position your previous earnings as base plus commission, rather than commission alone, using your draw as the base. There's nothing wrong with de-emphasizing your earnings since it eliminates the issue of why you're willing to work for less. But remember that potential employers may require a W2 form to confirm your pay history. Of course, you can always say that you earned the extra money on the side. If juggling the numbers this way makes you squeamish, another strategy is to be forthright and hope for the best. Prepare a concise yet thoughtful explanation of why you're willing to earn a straight salary, even though you've been earning more through commissions. This story should include your rationale for changing careers. If you sound convincing, most hiring managers say they won't give the issue a second thought.

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- [Answering Salary Questions during Phone Interviews](#)
- [How to Negotiate Your Salary in a Job Interview](#)