


# What You Need to Know & Do Upfront Before Signing Your Next Employment Contract

While I have written and spoken about salary negotiation  and employment contract negotiation before, I am now of the view that it may make sense to get some professional support upfront when negotiating your next employment contract.

Unfortunately rightly or wrongly we join a new employer very optimistic and take a lot of what is said and written on face value. However most of us forget that good times can soon turn bad, as evidence by the past few years. When this happens too many employees are left with employment contracts that are light weight. As such they walk away with very little if anything and feeling very disgruntled.

That said, employees need to take a more proactive approach to their career management, of which a part includes their employment contract. Time and sometimes even money needs to be spent upfront to set things up properly.

While the bigger firms will have fairly standardised employment contracts (as they cannot afford the headaches of thousands of different contracts) they still offer room for negotiation around salary, bonuses, redundancy, earn out clauses, bonuses etc. Smaller firms tend to offer more flexibility around employment contract negotiation.

In today's market, many recruitment or search firms will do the negotiations on your behalf. This can work in your favour or against you as I have covered in past articles. Personally unless they are excellent at this, you may be best to undertake the negotiations yourself or pay to engage a lawyer that specialises in employment contract negotiations. Having

a professional negotiator as the middle man has many benefits, including distancing yourself from your employer when it comes to the finer details so that your relationship at the outset is clean.

Generally employees seek out these services once they have been 'forced' to leave a company. It may make more sense to engage them upfront before you join, to minimise your chances of needing them at the other end! This site I have come across, [Executive Rights](#), offers a good starting resource for those looking to do more research into the topic. Also see their article on [Negotiating an Executive Employment Contract](#)

**Note:** a career strategist can assist you with the preparation and research stage of the process to ensure you are prepared to negotiate yourself or for when you engage legal representation.