

*What Does a Job Really Pay?*

**By Michael Sterling**

Compensation will be a key factor in your decision whether to accept a new position. However, few people take the time to really understand their economic choices, mostly because there are so many hidden factors, such as cost of living, benefits, and so forth. To help you put your choices into perspective, use the following guide to evaluate your prospective compensation package with what you're currently earning.

**Position Compensation Guide**

*Directions:* Compare the economics of the old and new job.

<i>Current Job</i>	<i>New Job</i>	<i>Element to Consider</i>
\$	\$	Base salary
\$	\$	Bonus, commissions
\$	\$	Additional perks
\$	\$	Profit sharing potential
\$	\$	Value of stock or equity
\$	\$	Pension
\$	\$	401(k) contribution
\$	\$	Reimbursed expenses
\$	\$	Cost of living differences
\$	\$	Moving expenses
\$	\$	Travel expenses
\$	\$	Insurance premiums
\$	\$	Property taxes
\$	\$	State, local taxes
\$	\$	Other expenses (specify)
\$	\$	\$ Difference (+/-)

Regardless of where compensation ranks on your list of priorities, it's a good idea to know what you may be getting into when faced with a career decision.