Job Offer Negotiation Role Plays

Scenario 1: The Over-confident Negotiator
You have just been offered a job with XYZ Technologies. It’s a great job, but you were at the top of your class and you believe you deserve a high salary and outstanding benefits. (The economy is picking up, right?) The employer has just offered you a salary of $100K. This salary seems in the range of acceptability, but you aren’t afraid to push the envelope.

How would you proceed?

Scenario 2: Prepared Negotiator
You have just been offered a job as an assistant professor at a prestigious research university. For years, you have hoped to attain a job like this and now it seems like a dream come true. You have prepared for this negotiation. This is what you’ve learned from talking with your advisor and others who have recently secured similar academic positions and also by researching various online sources:
Salaries in these types of positions range from $77K to $80K
Start-up packages range from $750K to $850K

How would you proceed?

Scenario 3: Audience Role Play
Form groups of 3 or 4 individuals. One person will play the job candidate, the second will be the employer, and the third will coach the job candidate. If you have a fourth, that person will observe and report on the interaction. Assume that a job offer has been made. The salary is a bit lower than the job candidate has heard that his/her peers have received. The other elements of the package have yet to be discussed. As the job candidate, you should try to strike the best deal you can, but you want to be sure to foster a positive long-term relationship with your future employer/colleague. If your role is that of the employer, you want to make the hire but you must be mindful that you must justify any/all concessions to your colleagues and supervisor/dean. If you are the coach, try to offer useful ideas/strategies to the job candidate. If you are the observer, take note of the productive and unproductive tactics both parties use.

Play the role play for 10 minutes or until negotiations have reached a conclusion. Then, discuss what worked and what didn’t. In a few minutes, everyone will discuss together.