

# Study finds ads can change pay equality

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## BUSINESS NEWS

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CHICAGO, Nov. 15 (UPI) -- Women are as willing as men to negotiate salaries if they have been invited to do so, researchers at the University of Chicago said.

Concerning a study in which some jobs were advertised as having a negotiable salary and others were not, John List, the Homer J. Livingston professor of economics, said "simple manipulations of the contract environment can significantly shift the gender composition of the applicant pool."

The study was done by posting 18 job openings online in nine major U.S. cities from November 2011 through February 2012. The ads received interest from 2,422 people, out of which 2,382 were identified by gender by sorting through first names.

Negotiations for salaries were conducted by email. However, the study found women initiated discussions of salary 8 percent of the time and men 11 percent when salaries were listed as fixed. When they were listed as negotiable, women initiated the discussion 24 percent of the time, while men did so 22 percent of the time.

The study also found women were three times more likely to apply for a job that listed the salary as negotiable.

The study was conducted by List and Andreas Leibbrandt, a senior lecturer at Monash University in Australia and a former postdoctoral fellow at the University of Chicago's Department of Economics.

"By merely adding the information that the wage is 'negotiable,' we successfully reduced the gender gap in applications by approximately 45 percent," said List.

The study concluded that how a job is listed could have tremendous effect on pay equity, given women, if invited to negotiate on pay at the start of a job, would start a job on equal footing or less far behind than a male job applicant.