

**BP:** I am a firm believer in always having a niche that you not only excel at but enjoy. And make sure to advertise this niche. Social media, press releases, health fairs, etc. are all great ways to get the word out. This will ensure a high demand. Refer to the ACFAS Marketing Toolbox at [acfas.org/marketing](http://acfas.org/marketing) to help with your promotional efforts.

Always try to have other buckets of revenue as well. Never assume you are above anyone and network, network, network! Opportunities exist in the least expected circumstances.

**JV:** Get involved! Volunteer on hospital committees as well as with national organizations, such as ACFAS. The more involved you get, the more you are in the know when it comes to changes or uncertainty. The added benefit is that while meeting more physicians, you are simultaneously networking and building your practice. Also, take advantage of educational opportunities, such as conferences, courses, etc. Not only will your skillsets improve, but you are also increasing your value as an employee.

### What can foot and ankle surgeons do to successfully negotiate salary or an employment contract?

**DB:** Knowing the trends is always helpful, such as the average salary for someone x amount of years out of training in your area.

**BP:** Besides knowing your PPV and your potential to increase it, be realistic in your expectations. Keep a small list of non-negotiables that are important to you, but be flexible on others. Sometimes an employer's benefits add up to a significant amount and you may be offered a lower salary. See if any of those are insignificant to you or unnecessary.

Be confident in presenting what you can add to the practice. Highlight specialty training or your niche that the place of employment would benefit from but maybe does not have. Be sure to research the practice ahead of time and explain what value this would mean in large terms.

Most importantly, present yourself as someone who will self-advertise and will continue to generate new patients.

**JV:** Take a realistic look at what you truly have to offer the practice. This can be anything from new patients and primary care provider referrals for a seasoned surgeon or simply a “go get them” positive attitude from a newly trained surgeon. For instance, a foot and ankle surgeon who has recently completed residency training or fellowship can demonstrate his or her eagerness to build the practice by offering weekend or evening hours.

### What advice do you have for foot and ankle surgeons who are unsure how to estimate their worth or who may be selling themselves short?

**DB:** Look at ACFAS' and MGMA's data and keep a record of what you bill, collect and produce so you can compare that to the salary you are actually making.

**BP:** This is when it is important to ask your peers who are in similar situations.

**JV:** Know that you bring value to any practice you join. The surgical skillsets you learn, develop and perfect in residency make you an asset. Still, try to ask as many questions as possible to as many people who are willing to answer them to get a better idea of the supply and demand in your area.

## Refresh Your Practice's Marketing Efforts with Spring FootNotes

Draw new patients out of hibernation and into your office with the spring edition of *FootNotes*. Available for download now in the ACFAS Marketing Toolbox, this latest issue features the following articles:

- *Enjoy Pregnancy Without Foot Pain*
- *High Ankle vs. Lateral Ankle Sprains: What's the Difference?*
- *Healthy Feet Can Reduce Seniors' Risk of Falling*

Customize the editable box on page 2 of *FootNotes* with your practice's contact information then:

- Post the issue on your practice's website and social media pages
- Leave printed copies in your office or include them with billing statements
- Distribute copies at any upcoming spring health events or speaking engagements you have scheduled in your community

Head to [acfas.org/marketing](http://acfas.org/marketing) for infographics, PowerPoint presentations, healthcare provider referral tools and many other free resources to help your practice bloom and thrive no matter the season.