

How MedTech Candidates Can Secure **Fair Value** in the 2026 Market

A practical guide to understanding total
compensation beyond base salary



Welcome

If you are feeling anxious about your next step in the medical sales job market in 2026, you are not alone. Salary increases across the UK, US, and Australia are running at around 3.3 to 3.6 percent in 2026. The cost of living is not moving that slowly.

None of it really adds up for someone facing another jump in household costs. That is why over 63% of candidates put a good salary at the top of their priorities when looking for a new role.

The trouble is that employers are not just being cautious. Many MedTech and medical device companies are dealing with higher payroll taxes, increased National Insurance contributions, rising minimum wage requirements, and unpredictable budgets. Two thirds say economic conditions limit how far they can stretch pay. 25% say they are dealing with instability. It leaves everyone in a difficult place.

For medical sales candidates, the smartest first step is to rethink how you evaluate an offer. Salary is only one piece. Total compensation gives a clearer view of what is really on the table.

One role might include a modest base salary but stronger commission, better territory support, or benefits that genuinely matter. Another might give you flexibility that saves thousands each year in travel or childcare.

This report breaks the full package down into clear parts. It looks at how to understand your market value, how to read an offer properly, how to recognise red flags, and how to negotiate without conflict. The aim is to help you approach the process with clarity and confidence about what fair compensation really looks like.



Understanding Your **True Market Value** in 2026

Most people lean on their last salary when they try to figure out their value. It feels familiar and safe. It also leads a lot of medical sales candidates in the wrong direction. Your previous salary was shaped by one moment in time.

It might reflect a manager who did not fully recognise how much responsibility you had taken on, or a year when the business could not pay competitively. Either way, it does not reflect the full picture of who you are now. Your value today sits in the results you deliver and the relationships you manage, not the number you were once given.

Start with Skills That Give You an Edge

Many people underestimate their own skillset. You take on new platforms, pick up responsibilities beyond your role, and become the person others rely on when something goes wrong. Your value keeps increasing, but it is not always reflected in your CV. Ask yourself:

- What do people trust me with most, even if it is not in my job description?
- What problems do I consistently solve for my employer?
- What have I learned in the last year that would be valuable in a future role?

Employers pay more for skills that reduce risk, save time, or strengthen performance. Most candidates do not realise how many of these they have built.

Look at the Reality of the Medical Sales Market Right Now

Your value does not sit in isolation. It shifts depending on what is happening in your area of the MedTech market.

Look at:

- Demand within your therapy area or product type
- How frequently relevant roles appear and how quickly they are filled
- Whether recruiters are proactively approaching you

If companies are expanding sales teams or launching new products, demand increases. If messaging shifts towards caution, restructuring, or consolidation, that tells a different story.

Remember: Location and Company Size Shape Pay

Geography still influences compensation. Salaries in major cities remain higher. Regional MedTech roles can be more flexible but pay differently. Also remember that the same job title can mean very different things depending on where you work. A young company might not match a corporate salary, but it may give you a level of influence you wouldn't get anywhere else.

Update the Track Record You Do Not Always Talk About

Medical sales hiring managers look for patterns of performance and behaviour. The account you stabilised under pressure. The clinician relationship you built over time. The deal you protected when things could have gone the other way. The moments where you made the right call without needing direction.

These are often what separate someone who looks good on paper from someone an employer is willing to stretch their budget for.

Try writing down:

- What you handled this year that you could not have managed three years ago
- The responsibilities nobody asked you to take, but you took anyway
- The feedback you receive informally from customers, managers, or colleagues

A lot of frustration in the current market comes from a simple mismatch. Candidates feel their pay has not kept up with performance or cost of living, while employers feel constrained by budgets that cannot stretch much further.

Salary Growth Is not Matching What People Need

Employers in the US are planning salary increases of around 3.5 percent. UK pay awards are sitting in the 3 to 4 percent range. Australia is expecting growth of around 3.3 percent.

Companies are making the same calculation, increase pay enough to remain competitive, but not so much that budgets become unmanageable. At the same time, more than 70 percent of job seekers say salary is their top priority, and many are not satisfied with what they currently earn.

Employers Are Working with Less Room Than It Appears

From the outside, it can be easy to assume MedTech companies are underpaying. Internally, many are working within tight financial constraints.

Payroll costs have increased. National Insurance contributions have risen. Wage pressures across organisations affect entire pay structures. This tension is not personal. It reflects the wider economic environment.

When Budget Limits Are Real, and When They're Not Quite Fixed

Not all budget constraints are equal. Some MedTech organisations genuinely do not have room. Others have a range but won't reveal it until they see a candidate who pushes them. You are likely looking at a real ceiling when the role sits in the public sector, the company states clear pay bands, or multiple candidates are being hired at the same level.

There's usually more room when the role has been open for a long time, the employer is struggling to retain people, or the skills you bring solve a costly problem.



Total Compensation: Beyond Base Salary

If you're looking for a new medical sales role, it's natural to check the salary first. 98% of candidates say they are far more likely to apply for a role when they know what it pays. But base salary is only the starting point. A slightly higher salary paired with weak commission or poor support can leave you worse off than a balanced package with stronger structure.

A full analysis of total compensation looks at:

1



BONUS OR COMMISSION STRUCTURES

In medical sales, this is often a significant part of your earnings. It only works if it is achievable. Ask how often people actually hit target, what was paid out last year, and whether the structure has changed. These answers tell you far more than the headline OTE.

2



BENEFITS

Good benefits reduce financial pressure. Weak ones increase it. Health cover, life assurance, and income protection all add real value. The right benefits package can matter just as much as a salary increase.

3



PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS

A strong pension contribution makes a meaningful long-term difference. A medical device company offering a 6 percent match instead of 3 percent can create a significant gap over time. It is one of the most overlooked parts of a package.

4



FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility has real financial value. In medical sales, this often comes down to territory size, travel expectations, and autonomy. Less travel can reduce costs and improve your overall quality of life.

5



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

When a company invests in your growth, it increases your future earning potential. Product training, clinical exposure, and career progression all carry long-term value.

6



LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

Annual leave, sick pay, and parental leave all affect how sustainable a role is. More generous leave is not just a perk, it is part of the overall package.

7



PERKS

Car allowance, fuel support, tech, and tools all make a difference day to day. They will not replace a strong salary or commission plan, but they shape how manageable the role is.

8



EQUITY OR PROFIT SHARE

In medical sales, this is often a significant part of your earnings. It only works if it is achievable. Ask how often people actually hit target, what was paid out last year, and whether the structure has changed. These answers tell you far more than the headline OTE.

9



NOTICE PERIODS AND PROBATION

Contract terms affect your security. A longer notice period can offer stability, while a shorter probation period reduces uncertainty.



The Value of **Flexibility** in Total Compensation

A few years ago, flexibility felt like something extra medical sales employers offered to appear progressive. That changed when hybrid working became part of everyday life. People reorganised their routines, and many realised they did not want to lose that balance.

Even though demand for flexibility remains high, the market is shifting. Fully remote roles have reduced, and while many MedTech companies still offer hybrid working, some are moving back towards office or field-based expectations. It is worth understanding a company's real position before you apply.

In medical sales, flexibility often comes down to territory design and travel expectations. Travel has a direct financial impact. Fuel, parking, time on the road, and overnight stays all add up. For many, especially those balancing family commitments, flexibility also affects childcare and overall work-life balance.

Even small changes, such as fewer travel days or more control over your diary, can make a significant difference to both your finances and your energy.

Understanding the Flexibility in a Job Offer

Before you accept that a business genuinely supports hybrid working, check whether the team's actual schedule matches the policy, whether leaders default to talking about "culture" when remote work comes up, and whether flexibility is allowed but not really encouraged. If flexibility is a genuine option, connect your request to how you work best. Employers respond more openly when they see how it supports output.



Professional **Development** as Compensation

Professional development works like long-term pay. When a company invests in your skills, it increases your earning potential, often faster than a salary increase. 84% of hiring managers say they will offer higher salaries to candidates with specialised skills. Learning also accelerates progression. A new product area, stronger clinical knowledge, or a better commercial approach can change the roles you qualify for. Certain types of development deliver the most value:

- Formal training: Product knowledge, clinical education, or commercial skills that strengthen performance
- Certifications: Industry-recognised credentials that build credibility and support progression
- Conferences and networks: Exposure to peers and ideas that help you solve problems faster
- Mentorship and stretch responsibilities: Taking ownership of accounts or projects that demonstrate growth

How to Judge a Company's Learning Culture

Ask direct questions:

- What training is available for this role?
- Is there a budget for development?
- How often do people progress internally?
- Are there opportunities to expand into new product areas or responsibilities?

Strong MedTech companies will give clear, specific answers. Weaker ones rely on vague statements without evidence. What you learn here can also support your negotiation.

Development as a Negotiating Point

Training budgets are often more flexible than salary. It is reasonable to ask for structured development, whether that is a defined training plan, dedicated learning time, or regular development reviews.

In many cases, this is one of the easiest parts of a package to shape, even when salary has limited room to move.

Negotiation Strategies for Different Career Stages



How you approach a compensation negotiation in medical sales depends on where you are in your career.

Early Career (0 to 3 Years)

Learning First, Numbers Second

If you are early in your medical sales career, focus on support, training, and territory quality. Salary matters, but growth matters more. Who you learn from and how quickly you develop will shape your future earnings far more than your starting package.

Mid-Career (3 to 8 Years)

Your Results Speak for You

At this stage, your track record carries weight. Negotiation is about clearly demonstrating performance, target achievement, account growth, and relationships you have built. This is what gives employers confidence to stretch on salary or commission.

Senior and Leadership Roles (8+ Years)

Scope Drives Value

At senior level, the focus shifts to the shape of the role. Territory size, strategic influence, leadership responsibility, and revenue impact matter more than base salary alone. If the scope is not right, the package will not compensate for it.

Career Changers

Make the Link Clear

If you are moving into medical sales or between therapy areas, make the connection obvious. Show how your commercial skills, relationship building, and resilience transfer directly. Employers value strong thinking and adaptability as much as sector experience.

Returning Professionals

Focus on Impact

If you are returning after time away, keep the focus on what you can deliver. Most hiring managers understand career breaks. Position the conversation around how quickly you can get up to speed and what support will help you perform at your best.





When to Walk Away: Red Flags

As you negotiate a MedTech sales role, watch for:

- Shifting numbers: not dramatic changes, but small movements in salary or commission. This often means the package is not clearly defined
- Subtle pressure to decide: it is rarely direct, but you feel rushed
- Poor signals in conversations: a tense team, vague answers on work-life balance, or casual mentions of long hours
- Verbal promises only: if it is not written into the offer, you cannot rely on it
- You doing the convincing: if you find yourself trying to justify the role to yourself, rather than the employer showing you it fits, it is usually a warning sign

Most people recognise these signs in hindsight. Trusting them earlier can save you from the wrong move.



Quick Notes on **Flexible Roles** and Geographical Variations

Remote work has not flattened salaries. In medical sales, companies still pay more in high-demand areas where competition and living costs are higher. London, for example, continues to sit above most UK regions. Hybrid working has softened the gap slightly, but most employers still base salary on the territory, not where you live.

Occasionally, you will find a role that is genuinely location-flexible. If you are based in a lower-cost area but paid at a national or city-weighted rate, it can create a significant financial advantage.

If you are aiming for a more flexible medical sales role, you need to demonstrate that you can manage your territory independently. Clear communication, strong organisation, and consistent judgement all help build that trust.



How **Recruiters** Can Advocate for Better Compensation

Negotiation is not something you can fully delegate, even to a specialist medical sales recruiter. That said, the right recruiter can make a meaningful difference.

There is a common assumption that recruiters push salaries down. In reality, the opposite is usually true. A strong offer leads to a better placement that is more likely to last. The real issue comes when candidates hold back. If a recruiter does not know what you actually want, they have to guess, and most will default to a safer position.

A good medical sales recruiter takes time to understand how you work, what motivates you, and what kind of environment suits you best. Give them a clear picture. Be honest about the minimum package you would accept, not just the ideal one. Be clear on what matters most and where you will not compromise.

Knowing When to Let Them Lead and When to Step In

Early in the process, it is often more effective to let the recruiter handle compensation discussions. Hiring managers tend to test and challenge expectations through them first.

Once you have met the team and know the role feels right, stepping into the conversation shows confidence and clarity around your expectations.

With the right recruiter, negotiation becomes less of a back and forth and more of a joint effort to shape a role that genuinely fits you.



Building **Leverage** for Your Future MedTech Career

It is easy to think, “I will fix the salary next time.” But pay has a way of following you. Once you accept below your true value, future offers often anchor to that level. That is how the salary shadow builds. Compensation should be treated as a foundation, not an afterthought.

Quick Ways to Build Leverage

Leverage is not about pushing harder. It comes from having options, or the confidence that you could create them.

- Stay visible: keep your LinkedIn updated, share insights, and stay connected with trusted medical sales recruiters
- Build high-value skills: stronger clinical knowledge, product expertise, and commercial performance increase your worth
- Run multiple processes: it gives you perspective and shows which companies move well
- Be willing to walk away: calmly and confidently when the fit is not right
- Stay in a stable position: negotiation is stronger when you are not under pressure to move

When you have real leverage, negotiation feels different. It becomes a conversation about fit, not a test you have to pass.

Getting the **Total Package** from Your Medical Sales Role



Most people approach a job search thinking salary is the whole story. But over time, it becomes clear that compensation is broader than that. It sits across your time, your earnings, your development, your security, and how the role fits around your life.

The medical sales market is tight. Salaries are moving slowly, costs are not, and employers are cautious. That does not mean you are limited. It means you need a clearer, wider view of what fair compensation actually looks like.

When you assess the full package properly, you make better decisions and approach negotiations with more confidence.



About Advance Recruitment

Advance Recruitment helps medtech and healthcare companies solve the hiring challenges that hold their business back.

Since 1997 we have specialised exclusively in medical sales and marketing recruitment. This gives clients and candidates deep market insight, long-standing relationships and a trusted, partnership-led approach.

We focus on the issues that have real commercial impact. Many organisations come to us because roles are hard to fill, time to hire is increasing, or they keep reaching the same limited pool of candidates.

Others need stronger processes, clearer employer branding, a better candidate experience or protection against costly hiring mistakes. Many simply need access to the hidden passive talent that makes up the majority of the market.

These challenges slow growth, increase pressure on teams and weaken competitiveness.

Our services are built around each client's needs. Our executive search solution suits business-critical leadership roles and niche, confidential or hard-to-fill positions that need a strategic, proactive approach.

For businesses planning multiple hires, we offer a pricing model that helps with forecasting of hiring costs, as well as reduce cost per hire.

We support organisations undergoing change through our outplacement services which help their employees who are affected by redundancy, develop the skills and confidence to move forward into new roles.

For candidates, we provide tailored career development support for those preparing for their next step.

What sets us apart is how we work. Our values of empathy, collaboration, quality and responsiveness shape every interaction.

We listen carefully, act quickly and take ownership. Most importantly, we give clients confidence that their decisions are informed, objective and based on a full view of the talent landscape.

Our aim is simple. We want to remove the stress, uncertainty and hidden costs of inefficient recruitment processes, by offering a focused, supportive and highly effective partnership that helps our clients build strong teams which drive business growth.

Testimonials



Thank you Karen... you were a legend.

During my 24 years in the medical industry I have dealt with a number of different medical recruiters.. both as a active employee looking for their next move and as an RSM looking for a new position to be filled .. and to say that Karen excelled in her contact, conversation, communication and vibe is an understatement - she was simply outstanding. Karen I feel took the time to align me to the correct role and company culture for me which is huge. I'd strongly recommend Karen to anyone in my medical device community

- Ryan W



“From the initial contact about the opportunity proposed, Liv has been amazing. Always catching up to see how you're doing and answering any questions you may have. It was a pleasure working with Liv and she made the process of looking for a new opportunity a breeze

- Krzysztof S

Take the **Next Step**

If you would like a confidential discussion about your current package or career, you can book a call here.



[Book a Confidential Career Review Call](#)



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