

“I WANT A RAISE”

FOLLOW THESE FIVE CONFIDENCE-BOOSTING STRATEGIES TO HONE YOUR NEGOTIATING SKILLS AND LAND A FATTER PAYCHECK.

BY GINA ROBERTS-GREY

Crunch your numbers

One surefire way to get shot down when asking for more moolah is not having numbers to justify your request. Ximena Hartsock, founder and COO of the communication tech company Phone2Action, says, “Go to your employer with data showing how your workload, responsibilities, etc. have increased in the past year to quantify your value.”

TALKING POINTS: Use tangible figures like, “I’ve taken on 50 percent more work since so-and-so left the company,” “I’m responsible for a 10 percent increase in sales,” or, “I was recently assigned project XYZ that will require 25 percent more time or that has six additional responsibilities.”



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CENTS
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Set the stage

The element of surprise is rarely helpful in salary negotiations, says Caroline Stokes, executive headhunter and coach for innovation leaders in Vancouver: “Instead of blindsiding a manager with a request for a raise, schedule a performance and compensation review meeting.” Not only does that give everyone the opportunity to consider the situation from all angles, it also demonstrates that you’re a professional and leader to be respected and properly compensated.

TALKING POINT: Say, “I would like to schedule a salary review” to define your expectations for the meeting you’re requesting with your supervisor or HR manager.

Brush up on your vocabulary

Don’t be apologetic. “Remove phrases like ‘I’m sorry’ or ‘I just’ from negotiation conversations,” says Lori A. Bumgarner, M. Ed., a career coach, placement counselor, and owner of paNASH, Nashville, Tenn. Don’t say you “think” or “feel” you should get a raise either—those words are too passive. Another mistake? Saying “I deserve a raise because...” “That has airs of entitlement that can be a huge turnoff,” Bumgarner adds.

TALKING POINTS: Open with “I know it’s time to discuss a raise because...” Then stick to facts related to your performance. “Don’t let personal issues like a rent increase or college tuition costs creep into the negotiation; those aren’t work-related,” says Bumgarner.

Consider more than money

A bump in pay isn’t the only possible outcome of a salary review. Everything and anything from a reserved (or closer) parking spot to flex hours or the opportunity to work remotely one day a week are valuable. Other possible benefits to consider: extra paid sick time or vacation days (which comes in handy for parents when their kiddos are home from school) and dedicated mentoring that can help you further your career and experience.

TALKING POINT: Bumgarner suggests adding a few dream perks to your salary wish list. That way if your boss regrets an increase in money is not an option, you can be prepared to counter with something that offsets your salary staying the same.

Time it right

Asking for a raise—even one that’s deserved—at an inopportune time can shut you out. Your company’s compensation and performance review culture can weigh heavily into how successful you are. Some employers stick to a strict schedule of reviews, while others evaluate salary at the time of promotion or if the company has experienced a significant uptick in profits.

TALKING POINT: Don’t throw in the towel if you missed your review window. Bumgarner says if you’ve recently made a significant contribution that boosted the company’s financial health, you can still request a meeting outside of your annual review. “Just make sure to have any and all supporting evidence that highlights why you deserve a bump in salary,” she says.