



# Point of View

## How to Negotiate a Pay Increase

*Getting a raise isn't always guaranteed, but you can initiate the process and negotiate a salary increase by being prepared and educated on how to approach it.*

Sure, your boss may call you in and offer you a raise. However, chances are overwhelming that they won't. So, if you want to earn more money this year than last, it's up to you to initiate the process. Be prepared and keep an open mind. Here are some key tips to help you successfully negotiate a salary increase:

- **Do your homework.**  
Planning and preparation are keys to the success of any negotiation. Know where you stand relative to your peers in the administrative and clerical industry. Research salary ranges on the Internet, look at job postings, and talk to peers in the industry to determine your actual worth and to build a strong case for the figure you are targeting.
- **Phrase your request assertively, not aggressively.**  
Base your request for a raise on a set of clear and objective criteria that include industry salary standards and your recent performance. Communicate honestly and directly about the value of your recent contributions to the company, and gather documentation to support your cause.
- **Define your goals.**  
Have a clear and well supported set of objectives. Start the conversation with a figure above what you are aiming for and be prepared to negotiate back to a figure closer to your minimum acceptable raise. Leave yourself leeway to compromise without having to be priced out of your target range.
- **Aim for a win-win.**  
Realize that both you and your boss need to walk away feeling you have gained. Your boss needs to be aware of what the company is getting in return for your higher pay. Ask your boss if you can assume more responsibility or redefine your role to justify the raise. Consider taking a training course to broaden your skills to expand the boundaries of your role.
- **Prepare yourself for all possible scenarios.**  
Anticipate all the concerns and possible objections your boss may have and prepare your responses. Concerns may include department downsizing or that you are already overpaid for your role in the company.

- **Listen.**  
Don't feel pressured to do all the talking. Listen to what your boss has to say and make every effort to understand what his/her needs and concerns are so that you can tailor potential solutions accordingly.
- **Don't get emotional.**  
Keep your tone professional and be prepared with logical rational arguments to counter any issues. Don't say anything you will later regret or make ultimatums.
- **Get it in writing.**  
To ensure there is no question of commitment and no room for ambiguity or retreat, get the terms you reached in writing with the right signatures.
- **Take time.**  
Don't make any hasty decisions. Request time to think over the final terms offered. If needed, revisit the terms with a new set of information or a more realistic agenda. Your boss may also need time to think, but set a time limit for getting a response.
- **The final step.**  
Give your boss all the supportive documentation needed to make a solid case should he or she have to justify the raise to even higher management. Always keep track of your accomplishments for future negotiations.

Whether you succeed or not in obtaining your pay raise, it is important to remember to be proactive in creating the right environment and conditions to negotiate. Securing a pay increase will become easier as you gain more experience doing it.