



The Career Center

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Asking Your Boss for a Raise

So you think it's time to ask your boss for a raise. Let's talk about how to do that. All good things need maintenance work – houses, kids, typewriters, marriages, and jobs.

Review what has happened since your last job review. What were your real duties and responsibilities at that time? By this we mean not just what your job description says you're supposed to do, look at your actual duties and responsibilities. Almost everyone modifies his/her job within six months of being hired. Your special interests, the way you go about things, your style all contribute to changing at least the emphasis you place on the tasks you do.

Employers are like bankers; they do their best to pay on the installment plan. They pay after the work is done, with payments made in inflated dollars on the basis of an agreed upon value arrived at in non-inflated dollars.

Asking for a raise

1. Do research on policies of the company. When are raises considered? What are others with the same or similar job positions making?
2. When is the best time to discuss a pay raise - When you take on new responsibilities or have done especially good job at something.
3. Stress why you deserve a raise, not why you need one.
4. Don't get angry if things don't go as planned.
5. Prepare to negotiate and find a compromise.

Four Step Process to getting a raise:

1. Be sure you have earned it. Review your real value to the organization. Where have you gone beyond the "routine" expected of you? Document the ways in which you have earned a raise. What have you done that makes you worth more than a "cost of living" increase?
2. Be sure your boss knows you have earned it. Make sure that you provide your boss with copies of projects completed, "Thank You" notes from customers or other departments.
3. Be sure that your boss knows that you know that you have earned a raise.
4. Be sure your boss knows that you know that he knows that you know that you have earned a raise.

How has your employer benefited from increased productivity - things like cost reductions, ideas that saved money, improved processes, or quality of service, better results, and faster. What have you done that has contributed to improved morale, relationships and healthier environment?

Don't be in a hurry. Pick the moment carefully. Wait until things are going well at work. Don't try to do this when you and/or your boss will not have time to give proper consideration to your request, or he/she will just put you off. Stay away from when there is a critical deadline to meet, seasonal pressures are on, something has gone wrong that your boss has to deal with, or when everyone is frazzled. Start by asking for a meeting to review your performance. Beforehand prepare a written list of all your accomplishments. Tell him/her that you would like to go over this list and so that it can be added to your personnel file. Make sure that as you review the items on the list you discuss the effect of these achievements on the organization. Next you test his/her willingness to give you a raise. Then you negotiate what that raise will be.

Perhaps you have realized that you are making a sale and that sales closing techniques are appropriate tools when asking for a raise. One of the techniques you can use is the "Three closes technique" where you ask two questions where you know you will get a "Yes" answer and then you ask the third question which is the one you hope will be a yes answer. It is based on the principle that people are more inclined to say yes if they have already said yes. If this technique doesn't feel comfortable, go purchase a book on sales "Closes" and modify one you like better to fit you. The three closes conversation would go something like this:

"I can't help but feel that I have made a significant contribution to this organization, would you agree? (YES) I have every reason to believe that our organization will continue to have these types of needs, challenges, and problems, don't you think so? (YES) Than would you be willing to give me a pay raise as evidence of your continued support of my hard work.?" (YES!)

Now negotiate a percentage increase over your current salary. In most cases a company will make a five percent increase very willingly, but if you want more, you may need to be prepared to continue the discussion. For example, one additional sales closing technique that is very effective in this situation is to break the cost down into it's smallest amount. Let's say that you currently make \$26,000 a year. A 10% increase is an extra \$2,600 a year. Divide that by 52 weeks in a year and you get \$50 a week. Divide that by 40 hours a week (or however many you actually work) and you get \$1.25 an hour. Then you say to your boss,

"Let me ask you, would it be worth say \$1.25 more an hour to you to know that I would continue to perform as well or better than I have this year?"

If you get a "No" answer to this question, you probably should start looking for a better job.