



## The Career Center

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### Asking Your Boss To Pay For More Training

So you'd like to go back to school and get that advanced degree but you really can't afford it on your current salary. Maybe you just need to ask your boss for a raise? Most career advisors would agree however, that decision-makers within a company would rather pay for classes that help you do your job better, than to give you a permanent raise.

Asking a boss for any type of increased benefit is a learned skill and before you rush in and pop the questions, you need to understand how to position your request. The decision of whether or not a boss will pay for your further education will not be based on your needs or how well you do your job, or even the amount of work you do. The decision hangs on your ability to communicate to your boss how your increased education will benefit the company.

Ask yourself, why is it worth more to your boss for you to get more education? How will investing in you benefit the company? How will the classes you take make you better able to do your job? What needs does the company have that you could help resolve if you had more training? Be prepared to discuss what classes you want to take and their relationship to your job and the company's focus.

You also have to think about the risks involved. Think through what might happen and decide how you would respond to each possibility. Your boss could say "Yes" and you would sign up for a class and turn in a receipt. But what if the boss says "No?" Now you have three options:

- 1) Keep working in your same job as if nothing happened – all the while wondering what message your boss was sending you by denying your request;
- 2) Quit and look for a different job;
- 3) Keeping working while you secretly look for a better job that pays for continued education. Let's face it; you don't want your boss to say no. It is well worth putting the time and effort into leading your boss to say yes!

The process of actually asking your boss can happen in several ways and there probably *is* a "best" way to ask. Some decision-makers are able to listen to your rational, come to the same conclusion you did and say yes right away. Others have a hard time making decisions because either they worry about how this decision will be perceived by others, or they worry about how it will affect the work you do and if pushed they will be more likely say no than yes. For those individuals you need to put your request in writing and follow up with a face to face meeting. Each boss is different and you need to know your boss well enough to know what will work. Look for a consistent behavior pattern. When faced with decisions outside of the core of your business, how does your boss react? When other co-workers get requests granted, what is the process they use to get to yes?

When you finally sit down with your boss to talk about it, be persuasive, sound confident, business like, and believable. Provide a solid argument as to how your increased knowledge will benefit the company. Anticipate the objections that may come up and prepare counter arguments supported by facts you have researched. Do not let yourself get pushed into making an ultimatum, "If you don't do this, I'll resign." When that happens the answer is almost always no and even if they say yes, the chances are you'll be out of a job before the end of the year.