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Are You Going To Get A Raise?

What are the right tactics to use when arguing for a raise? Read below to learn more.

Approaching your direct supervisor for a raise is a gut-churning prospect for just about everyone. The best way to calm your nerves, give yourself confidence, and increase the chance that your boss will say “Yes, of course, we’ll pay you more money!” is to build a solid case for why you deserve the raise.

It is always reasonable to expect fair compensation for job performance, but there are also clear indicators to look out for that may be a good reason your boss says “No.” Use the lists below to plan your approach.

Red flags that you or the company aren’t ready for your desired salary increase

1. **Your company is on a hiring freeze.** You may be unable to negotiate a raise for the simple (yet frustrating) reason that the company isn’t financially able to give you one. Other indicators that could mean the money isn’t there for a raise: company revenue goals or other KPIs are below expectations, coworkers are on furlough, positions remain open and unfilled, and/or cuts are being made to benefits like 401(k) matching programs or health insurance.

If this is the case, start the conversation about desiring a promotion in the future and set check-in meetings and stretch goals with your manager so you can be on track when the company rebounds.

2. **Your reason for asking is that your current salary doesn’t meet your financial needs.** This argument shouldn’t be part of your case for why you deserve a salary bump because it doesn’t reflect on your value to the company—it says more about your inability to budget! If you knew the job wasn’t going to pay your bills from the start, compensation should have been part of your hiring discussion.
3. **You’ve just completed additional job training.** Receiving job training is a great first step to becoming more valuable to your company, but it isn’t yet a reason for a raise. Your manager will want to see your efforts directly tied to business results first.

4. **You're the only person to understand a business system or process.** This may sound counterintuitive, but claiming that you are the only person who understands something or could perform a task isn't a strong reason to receive more money-but it is a good reason for the company to cross-train their employees and break down silos!
5. **You're a bare-bones or invisible worker or are often AWOL.** Doing exactly what's required of you but no more is a good reason to pass a class but not get an A+ or scholarship-or a raise. Raises go to employees who take initiative, who are known by their co-workers and higher-ups, and who are present and active when decisions are made.

Points that build a good case for a raise

1. **You now solve a bigger problem or pain point than originally hired to manage.** Tying your efforts, ideas, and skills to solutions that increase company revenue, expand market footprint, attract new customers, or develop new products is the single strongest support to a request for a raise.
2. **Your work regularly receives recognition and praise.** Words of appreciation and recognition can mean a lot and feel nice, but receiving increased compensation for such excellent work is another reasonable way to expect recognition. Like the point above, the key is to record these moments of commendation so you can present them alongside your salary increase request.
3. **You have taken on a greater level of responsibility.** Chaos, uncertainty, setbacks, challenges, and certainly anything "unprecedented" are all moments for you to stretch yourself and take on additional responsibility. If you have solved the unsolvable for your team or taken on others' tasks, those are excellent reasons for more money.
4. **Your skills are in high demand.** Sometimes companies intentionally or unintentionally pay workers less than they are worth in the marketplace. Salary compression is what happens to people's salaries when they stay in the same job and their annual increases are limited by policies that say that no one can get more than a few percentage points in increased salary each year. Your value outside your company may be much higher. Regardless of why you have fallen prey to wage compression at your current employer, you have two options: say nothing and remain underpaid and undervalued, or ask for a raise and be willing to leave the company if they won't update what you're worth to them.
5. **You see your company spending money on other resources but not salaries.** This can indicate that the funds are available, but either no one is asking for them or the company doesn't value their employees as their most important resource. In the first case, being the first to make your case for a raise could mean a quick "Yes" from your boss. If it's the second, then it might be time to look for another job-and be sure you ask for what you're worth in the current market!

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