What to say when you ask for a pay rise

Few things are as nerve-racking as asking for a pay rise, in fact, 54% of Kiwi workers feel nervous or anxious when it comes to asking for a pay rise. Asking for more money can be complex, but doing the right research and preparation can make you feel more confident and better set for success.

How you prepare for a salary discussion can include getting a sense of salaries in your industry, finding ways to demonstrate your performance, and checking in with the bigger picture – including what economic conditions are like.

Then it's important to set up a meeting with your boss or manager.

Consider your timing. A stressful or busy time for your manager or company, such a during a major project or crisis is not a good time to ask for a raise. Wait until your manager is likely to be receptive to a conversation about salary after a successful project or a good performance review.

Ideally, you want to do this privately and in person, but a video call is an option, too. Ask to set up a short meeting to discuss your salary, rather than bringing it up at an unrelated meeting or without notice.

Practice the conversation with a friend beforehand so you feel comfortable with how you will open the discussion and asking for what you want while listening carefully to objections.

Once you're ready to have the conversation, try using this script to guide you.

1. **Start with the positives about your role and what you're proud of**
   "Thank you for making the time to meet with me today. As you know I have been working here for [amount of time] and have recently been focusing on [quick summary of what you've been doing].

   I have really enjoyed being part of [project or team] and am proud of the role I played in this organisation."

2. **Talk about your achievements**
   "Over the past 12 months I have [talk about your achievements that have benefited the organisation]."

   "If you are able to include a dollar figure or percentage improvements do that," says Jane Jackson, a career management coach and author of Navigating Career Crossroads. "If you are not able to provide numbers then talk about the perceived benefit – such as how you streamlined a process or improved team morale. Tangible

and intangible benefits are what you must bring to the attention of your manager."

Be sure not to let emotions rule during the discussion and be mindful not to be defensive in your responses to questions you may be asked.

3. **Get to the point**
   "With my achievements over the past 12 months and bearing in mind the benefits I've brought to the organisation recently, I'd appreciate it if you would consider a review of my current salary.

   I've also had a look at current compensation levels for roles similar to mine in companies of the same size and believe I have a clear view of the industry standard salary."

   At this point, your manager will likely require time to think over your request and have the idea approved by other stakeholders involved in salary increases.

   It's likely the exact dollar value discussion will be revisited in a later conversation, should your request be fulfilled.

Find out how your salary compares with the average salary for your role, with our salary comparison tool here.

The next steps

After the meeting, Jackson suggests sending an email thanking your manager and include the points you discussed. "If there is another conversation to be had, confirm the day and time this will happen," she advises.

"If the answer to your request is no, you can ask if there is another way to acknowledge your achievements, such as bonuses, a flexible work arrangement, time off in lieu, extra paid leave," says Jackson. "If there is no leeway whatsoever, your manager will still have gained an awareness of your value. You can ask them for another discussion in three to six months' time."

If your manager agrees to a pay rise, ensure you ask for this in writing (email is fine), clarify when the raise will be paid from and suggest that you meet in another year to review your progress and salary again.

Preparation is the key to feeling more confident – you could even practice by running through what you'll say with a friend. While asking for a pay rise can be daunting, it's a great opportunity to highlight the value you bring to your role.Find out the latest salary trends for your role and industry, so you can negotiate your next salary confidently.

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