

3 tips to help you ask for a pay rise

If the idea of discussing salary with your manager makes you squirm, you're not alone. Money can be a difficult thing to talk about at the best of times.

As it turns out, while 59% of Kiwis aged 18-64 agree salary is the most important reason they go to work, 63% have never asked for a pay rise.

[Sabina Read](#), SEEK's Resident Psychologist, says that for most people money is a loaded topic.

"We've all grown up with various ideas and representations about what money means and we bring those interpretations into the workplace."

But, Read adds, while your reluctance to talk about money may help you avoid awkward conversations, it could be holding you back in your career and, in a time of stagnating wages, playing havoc with potential earnings. "If you don't find a way to approach this topic, no one else is going to do it for you," she says.

As a first step, Read suggests looking more closely at what may be holding you back from broaching the subject with your manager and considering ways to overcome psychological blocks. "Do you think you're not worth it? Or, if your colleagues earn less, are you worried about asking for more? So much of that kind of thinking sits behind the barriers to talking about money with your boss."

Of course, it's important to consider your timing – difficult economic conditions often mean businesses have to put pay rises on hold, so it's important to think about the situation in the business or organisation you work for.

Next, you need to arm yourself with the tools to have more informed conversations. Consider these three tips to make salary conversation less stressful and more successful.

1. **Know your worth**

To prepare for a salary conversation, check salary guides in your industry for a clear picture of ranges and market rates.

"Knowing market rates can make a salary conversation more fact-based, which correlates with a less emotional or loaded tone. Approaching the topic from a viewpoint of numbers and statistics, as well as, say, pretending you're negotiating on behalf of a talented, committed and credentialed employee, can help result in a more professional and convincing dialogue because the facts simply speak for themselves," says Read.

Ask yourself: do you know salary averages and trends in your role type and industry?

2. **Make your case**

It's not just about achieving the requirements of your role; but being able to demonstrate the added value you deliver to the business unit or organisation by going above and beyond your job description. This can put you in a position of strength in any conversation about money.

"While market rates are relevant, it's also important to equate dollars with contribution, value and outcomes," Read advises. "If our performance is below par, market rates are irrelevant. However, when we know and value our own worth, it makes sense that salary is one way in which our results can be recognised and validated."

Ask yourself: what have you done that's above and beyond, and how have your actions overall delivered business value?

Make your case: [read these tips on asking for a pay rise](#).

3. **View the bigger picture**

Sometimes an organisation may not be able to give pay rises because of budget limitations – especially during times where economic conditions are tough. Seeing the situation from your manager's perspective, says Read, can help you not only view the bigger picture but have a clearer vision in your head about how you map out the conversation.

A salary conversation can be the perfect opportunity, she adds, to talk about non-monetary benefits that would make a difference to your life.

"Appreciate the bigger picture and, instead of looking at the existing framework of your organisation, shine the light on your own interests, passions, needs and values. Consider what would make a difference to you. For one person it might be additional learning and development, for another it might be knowing that 'Every Friday I can do an art class at 4pm'."

Ask yourself: if you can't get a pay rise now, what else do you value – flexibility, training, mentorship towards promotion – that you could ask for in the meantime?

Improve your chances: take a look at the [top five non-financial rewards](#) you can negotiate.

Source: Independent research conducted by Nature on behalf of SEEK. Interviewing 4000 Kiwis annually.

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