



**BONUS**



# Salary Tutor

## How to ask for a raise

*7 steps to increase your salary,  
even in a bad economy*



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# Hello, and welcome!

In my book “*Salary Tutor: A Novel Approach to Negotiating Salary*,” I use a storytelling approach to walk job-seekers through the process of developing the appropriate mindset and techniques to take on any job interview.

The book helps you analyze the market, seek out your dream job, and come away prepared and confident when negotiating your new salary.

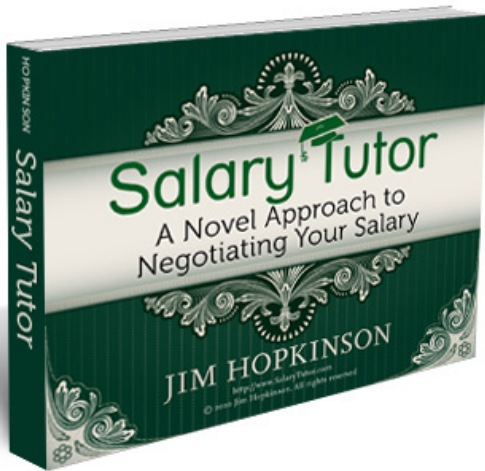
But what if...

- You like your current job (but want a raise)
- You're up for a review (and don't want to mess it up)
- The economy is bad (and has you worried)

Well, the salary negotiation techniques in the book still hold true, but this companion document will teach you:

## HOW TO ASK FOR A RAISE

*7 steps to increase your salary, even in a bad economy*



# Negotiating salary while you still have a job

## 1. Lay the groundwork

The best negotiations rarely occur when you angrily march into your manager's office, start complaining about how you are underpaid, then demand a raise. A much better idea is to have a plan laid out in advance.

In fact, the first step toward proving your worth as an employee starts on your first day of work. You should maintain a simple list that documents your accomplishments. This doesn't mean you have to constantly have your resume updated or keep meticulous details about every single project you've worked on. Rather, keep a simple Word document that you can refer to quickly in order to document success after a major accomplishment on the job. In fact, let's call this your "Accomplishment Manifesto."

Did you just receive a glowing e-mail from a client because you delivered a great project on deadline and under budget? Copy and paste the praise into your document for future reference. Did the website you work on have its highest traffic numbers

### *Accomplishment Manifesto*

- 9/25/08 - Hired as Technical Producer
- 10/10/08 - Worked with marketing, editorial, and design to set 2009 product plan
- 10/20/08 - Secured \$30,000 ad buy for Q1 launch
- 11/7/08 - Organized offsite department meeting: *"I was really impressed with the way you guys pulled off the gig today. From planning it to presenting it to the group, it was well thought out and came off without a hitch."* – Jim Reiss, VP of Production
- 11/18/08 - Attended focus groups in Chicago with design team to gain customer feedback on upcoming website redesign
- 1/6/09 - Technical project lead for re-launch of entire website, managing a team of 6
- 3/28/09 - Raise / promotion to Senior Technical Producer

ever due to a marketing program you ran? Note the percentage increase and jot it down. Did you bring in new business? Win an award? Learn a new skill needed for the job? It all goes into the Accomplishment Manifesto for safekeeping.

Why? You need to brag a little because you can't always rely on your boss to remember all the things you've done on a day-to-day basis. By creating a quick portfolio of your accomplishments, you can visually document your worth to the company.

## 2. *Decide on timing*

While you can certainly ask for a raise any day of the year, it's in your best interest to know what the overall budget cycle is for your business. Find out if reviews are handled by the HR department, or if your manager has the final say. Sometimes companies have a detailed review process, where you're up for a raise based on your individual hire date, while others do groups of promotions at the same time.

Either way, most businesses run on a fiscal calendar (not necessarily January through December), so you will want to find out when budgets are being developed and time your inquiry for a salary increase at the proper moment. You don't want to sit down

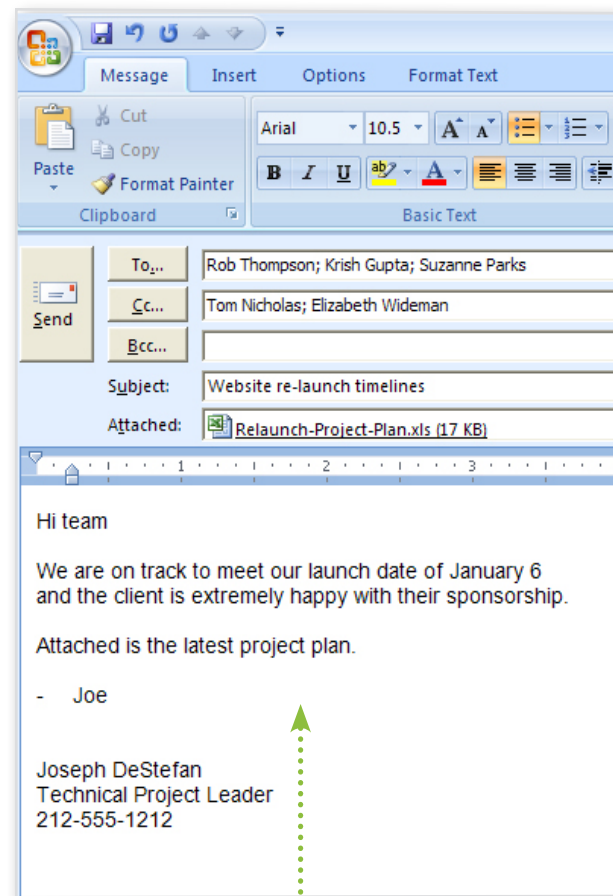


and ask for a raise and hear “Oh I’m so sorry, you should have talked to me 2 weeks ago. We’ve just locked down the budget and I won’t have any money allocated for raises until the next fiscal year.”

### 3. *Get noticed*

Although you’ll be armed with a laundry list of accomplishments from your previous projects, managers do suffer a little from “What have you done for me lately?” syndrome. Therefore, as you’re preparing to ask for a raise or your annual salary review approaches, focus on high-profile projects that have more visibility within the company.

During this time, it’s ok to go a little “cc:” happy. This doesn’t mean you should spam your manager or constantly brag about the projects you’re involved with, but like your Accomplishment Manifesto, you want to keep your boss (and in select cases, THEIR boss) in the loop on the things you’re working on. Forward them the latest version of the project, include them on the invite to the presentations you’re doing, and make sure they know when milestones are reached. ....



If you're in sales, of course you want to keep all your current accounts happy. But you could also spend extra time trying to lure that big account that the company has always wanted to land. If you're with a more traditional company and they're making a new push online, volunteer to help with the launch of the new website. Essentially, getting involved with anything that will raise your profile is a good idea.

#### 4. *Set a date*

When asking for a raise, you don't want to catch your boss off guard. Mention casually that you're going over your goals for the next 6 months, and that you'd like to discuss your next steps at the company.

Then, send an official invite and set up an appointment to get on their calendar. Be smart about the day and time that you choose. As you're working, notice which days of the week are most hectic for your boss or filled with the most meetings, and avoid those. Does your boss get in early and start the day with a huge cup of coffee? Make an early-morning appointment.



*Make sure your boss has already had his/her morning coffee!*

Is your boss immediately swamped with meetings and e-mails in the morning? If so, a time later in the day might be best. Setting a date a week or two out gives your boss time to reschedule if there is an important project going on or if a vacation is planned.

## 5. *Know their style*

When presenting to your boss the reasons you deserve a raise or promotion, it's important to know their style. If they're a no-nonsense, bottom-line type of manager, make sure you keep the information to a minimum, but provide them with lots of numbers and hard facts that prove your worth.

If they're a more social, nurturing type of manager, use your data to paint a picture and tell a story of your involvement with the group and how you're helping the company as a whole succeed.

Emphasize the amount of time you've spent with the company if applicable, the effort you've put in, and the results you've produced. Create a Salary Analysis Chart (as detailed in the *Salary Tutor* book) to make an impact and show your worth in the industry.



## 6. Know your options

What if things don't go as planned? Should you threaten to leave the company and say you have another offer (even if you don't)? This is definitely a high-risk tactic, but does give you a lot of leverage. Employees are expensive commodities within a company to find, hire, train, and retain, and in most cases it's a lot easier to give you a few thousand dollars more or a higher title vs. finding someone else.



However, if you use this tactic, you must be prepared to walk. In the end, do you really want a bidding war? In other words, let's say you've been at your company for 5 years, are making \$50,000 per year, but haven't received a raise in the last 2 years. You go on another interview and they offer you \$56,000. You tell your boss, they say they don't want you to leave, and they counter-offer for \$60,000.

You're faced with an interesting situation. If you were excited about the potential new job, you now have to go back to them and either decline their offer, or ask for more money (which they might not be able to provide). If you stay with your current job, now you might be asking, "Why did it take them so long to pay me what I'm worth, and they only did so when I threatened to leave?"



And if you do decide to stay, now your boss knows that you weren't completely happy before and were interviewing behind their back. Of course, if you're completely happy with either option, and the end result is that you get more money and are paid what you're worth, then you have two great outcomes. Just be sure you play out all possible scenarios beforehand.

## 7. *Make your case*

When presenting your case, make sure you phrase your argument in terms of how you have helped the company.

If you focus on *your* value to the company and the hard facts that show your contributions, a smart company will do the right thing and keep their best employees happy.

### *Reasons you deserve a raise:*

- You have made the company money
- You have saved the company money
- You do a job no one else can do

### *NOT reasons you deserve a raise:*

- They raised your rent / living in the city is so expensive (We *all* have high rent and things are getting more expensive for everyone)
- The economy is really bad right now (The economy is bad for everyone, especially businesses)
- You're getting married/getting divorced/having a baby/buying a house (Yes, all of these things cost money, but that is not the company's problem)
- Because Johnny or Suzie just got a raise (OK, now you're just whining. But seriously, you need to prove **YOUR** worth to the company, not someone else's)

# Negotiating salary in a bad economy



**W**hen the stock market is booming, housing values are skyrocketing, and sales are coming in from all angles, it's a little easier to ask for a piece of the pie. But when the forecast is doom and gloom, does that mean you should completely write off the chances of getting a raise? Not quite.

## *Know the situation*

Similar to knowing the budget calendar as suggested, you need to know your company's health. Nothing will get you an instant 'no' faster than walking in and asking for a 15% raise if it's a known fact that a dozen people were just laid off and there's been a hiring freeze for the last 3 months. One of the humorous lines going around during the worst of the recession was "Not getting laid off is the new getting promoted." So know your place.

## *It's all about the money*

During the good times, there's room for branding, gaining market share, and exploring new markets. But when things get lean, it's all about cash flow. In almost all cases, anything that is going

to bring in direct revenue will be prioritized highest, so put yourself in a position to work on these revenue-generating projects.

Depending on your position and the company, opportunities to trade cash flow for cash may exist. While such opportunities might not be able to get you a straight raise, incentives for increased revenue might be rewarded. For example, propose to your manager a situation where, if you meet X goal and bring in Y amount of business, you'll get a percentage of that. It becomes win-win because they don't have to pay you if you don't perform, but both of you look good if money is coming into the company.

### *Set the stage for the recovery*

In a bad economy, it's still OK to ask for a meeting with your boss to talk about your career objectives. Sit down and make it clear that you understand the current climate. Say that you know that it's difficult to give raises now, but show that you deserve one based on your work.

This could be the best time to ask for a higher *title*. If you've proven your worth, your boss might feel bad that they can't reward you monetarily, but will happily bump you from manager to senior manager. Then ask for a review in six months, whether the economy rebounds or not, and put it on the calendar.





What you've done is set the stage for recovery. If the economy does rebound in six months, press them for the salary increase that would have gone along with your recent bump in title. If you're still seeing resistance within your company, at least when you start shopping your resume around, you've got a higher title to command more money at your next opportunity.

### *What it says about you*

← Sure, your coworkers might think you're crazy for setting up these meetings when institutions around you are going belly-up, and your boss might incredulously ask "You're asking for a raise in *THIS* economy? You're lucky you still have a job!"

However, a good supervisor knows your forward-thinking planning says something unique about you. Just the fact that you are aware of the situation, are communicating openly with your boss about your career objectives, and are tracking your accomplishments, shows initiative and focus. It helps you understand the business when you realize the areas that are most critical to survival when times are lean. And rather than burying your head like other employees, you're trying to focus on the positive and build for the future.

Most importantly, speaking up will keep you in mind, and lets your boss know you're looking to advance. Think about it... when the business does start to roar back to life, who is the first person they'll have in mind when it's time for reviews?



*Looking for more information about advancing your career, including just the right thing to say during your salary negotiation? Check out:*

**Salary Tutor: A Novel Guide to  
Negotiating Salary**

**WWW.SALARYTUTOR.COM**

