

# Negotiating your salary: How to ask for a pay rise

## 1. Getting started

Discuss these questions with a partner:

1. On a scale of 1 (very uncomfortable) to 5 (very comfortable), how do you feel about discussing money and salaries?
2. In your culture, is it common to negotiate your salary?
3. What do you think are the most important things to do before asking for a pay rise?

*Teacher's note: Answers will vary. The goal is to start a discussion. For question 3, students might suggest things like researching salaries, listing their achievements, or choosing the right time.*

## 2. Essential vocabulary

Match the terms with their definitions:

1. <b>Pay rise / raise</b>	d. An increase in the amount of money you earn.
2. <b>Workload</b>	f. The amount of work a person is expected to do.

3. <b>Achievements</b>	g. Successful things you have done, usually through effort.
4. <b>Valuable asset</b>	b. Someone or something that is useful or important.
5. <b>Compelling argument</b>	a. An argument or reason that is strong and persuasive.
6. <b>Retain composure</b>	e. To stay calm and not get emotional.
7. <b>Pay packet</b>	c. The amount of money a person earns.
8. <b>Salary checker</b>	h. An online tool to find out the typical pay for a job.

### 3. Video: Five steps to success

Watch the video about asking for a pay rise and answer the questions below.

1. What is the first step you should take before asking for a raise?  
You should find out if you are suitable for a raise by using a salary checker or looking at similar roles on job sites.
2. According to the video, when is a good time to ask for a raise? Name one example.  
A good time is when you've taken on a higher workload or you've just had a big success in your role.
3. What should you focus on when preparing your arguments?  
You should focus on your achievements and skills and why they make you a valuable asset.
4. How should you behave during the meeting?  
You should dress smartly, make your points clearly, and retain your composure.
5. What is the alternative if you cannot get a meeting with your boss?  
You can write a professional letter that provides a compelling argument for getting a raise.

[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

## 4. Vocabulary in context

Complete the sentences with phrases from the video script.

*taken on a higher workload | a valuable asset | retain your composure | a compelling argument | a fighting chance*

1. Since my colleague left, I've **taken on a higher workload**, managing clients from two departments.
2. Even if the negotiation gets tense, it's important to **retain your composure** and remain professional.
3. With my new qualifications and successful projects, I believe I am **a valuable asset** to the team.
4. If you do your research and prepare well, you give yourself **a fighting chance** of getting the raise you want.
5. You need to present **a compelling argument** that clearly shows why you deserve a higher salary.

## 5. Grammar focus: Justifying your request with the Present Perfect

When you present your case for a pay rise, you need to talk about your achievements. The **Present Perfect** (have/has + past participle) is ideal for this because it connects your past actions to your present value to the company.

- It shows your achievements are recent and relevant \*now\*.

- Example: "In the last six months, I **have increased** sales by 15%." (This success is still relevant today).
- Example: "I **have taken on** new responsibilities, including training new team members." (You started in the past and still have these responsibilities).

Improve these simple statements by rewriting them using the **Present Perfect** and adding a positive result. The first one is an example. (Note: Example answers are provided, but student answers may vary.)

1. I managed the 'Phoenix' project.  
→ *I **have successfully managed** the 'Phoenix' project, which resulted in a 10% increase in client satisfaction.*
2. I learned how to use the new software.  
→ **I have learned** how to use the new software, which **has helped** to streamline our data analysis process.
3. I trained two new employees.  
→ **I have trained** two new employees, who are now fully contributing members of the team.
4. I improved the workflow in my department.  
→ **I have improved** the workflow in my department, which **has reduced** project completion time by 15%.
5. I built a good relationship with our biggest client.  
→ **I have built** a strong relationship with our biggest client, which **has led** to them renewing their contract for another two years.

## 6. Useful phrases for negotiating

Study these phrases to use at different stages of your salary negotiation.

### Opening the conversation:

- "Thank you for meeting with me. I'd like to discuss my role and my future at the company."
- "I was hoping we could talk about my compensation."
- "I'd like to schedule a time to review my salary."

#### Presenting your case:

- "Based on my research, the industry average for this role is..."
- "Over the past year, I have consistently exceeded my targets."
- "Given the additional responsibilities I've taken on, I believe a salary adjustment is appropriate."
- "I am confident that my contributions have added significant value to the team."

#### Responding to a "no":

- "I understand that budgets are tight. Could we discuss other options, like a performance bonus or additional training?"
- "What would I need to achieve in the next six months to be considered for a raise?"
- "Can we agree to revisit this conversation in three months' time?"

#### Concluding the meeting:

- "Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to hearing from you."
- "I appreciate you taking the time to discuss this with me."

## 7. Role-play: The negotiation

Work in pairs. One person is the 'Employee', the other is the 'Manager'. Read your role card and prepare for a 5-minute meeting. Use the vocabulary, grammar, and phrases from this lesson.

### Role A: Employee

You have been in your role for two years and have performed well. You want to ask for a 10% pay rise. Prepare to:

- Politely start the conversation about your salary.
- Present at least three specific achievements from the past year (use the **Present Perfect!**).
- Mention your research on industry-average salaries.
- Respond calmly and professionally if your manager says no.

### Role B: Manager

You are the employee's manager. You know they are a good worker, but the company's budget is very tight this year. Prepare to:

- Listen to the employee's request and achievements.
- Explain that a large pay rise is not possible right now due to budget constraints.
- Offer an alternative, such as a smaller 3% raise, a one-time bonus, or more responsibility with a salary review in 6 months.
- Try to keep the employee motivated and happy.

**After the role-play, discuss:** How did it go? What was easy? What was difficult?

*Teacher's note: Circulate and monitor students during the role-play. Listen for correct use of the target vocabulary, the **Present Perfect**, and the useful phrases. After the activity, lead a feedback session based on the discussion questions.*