



Asking for a pay rise can be stressful at the best of times. Regardless of how hard you have worked, the value you have brought to the company or what your market intel (aka recruiters) are saying; fronting up to the boss, regardless of how well you get on, and asking for a payrise is tough.

- Kate Boorer, Founder YPWA

YPWA Young
Professional
Women
Australia

7 THINGS TO DO BEFORE ASKING FOR A PAYRISE



Hi

My name is Kate Boorer, Founder & CEO of Young Professional Women Australia (YPWA).

We help successful women in the early-mid stages of their career who are feeling stuck, undervalued and are wanting to accelerate their results in career and life.

We help them get clear about what they want when it comes to career and life, develop a plan to make it happen and support them to step up and create the life they deserve, doing what they love, earning what they are worth.

This short guide will show you where to start when it comes to the money part.

Kate



Research shows that women are far less likely to negotiate salary on the way in for a new role, and when negotiating mid-way through employment are far more likely to compromise or accept an increase that is given instead of negotiating for what they feel they are worth.

Time and time again, I hear women tell me they feel over-worked, underpaid and (here comes the kicker) unfulfilled with their career and life! Many women are stuck in jobs working their heart out hoping that someday, some way, the boss will stroll in and give them the salary and recognition they deserve. Sorry to disappoint but if that's you..... the chances of that happening are low, especially when your male counterparts are banging the door down every 6 months for promotions and remuneration increases.

When we look at the average male and female salary in Australia there is 15.3% gap¹. There are many reasons that this gap exists beyond the obvious (that men are simply paid more) some of which include:

- More women work part time than men (perhaps because it is not cost effective to work full time or carer responsibilities make it too hard)

¹ <https://www.wgea.gov.au/addressing-pay-equity/what-gender-pay-gap>

- Women are less likely to ask for a pay rise or negotiate for more when a pay rise is received

- Women are far more likely to stay longer in existing roles than to ask for or take promotion / progression opportunities (impacting experience and achievements)

At YPWA our focus is on supporting, empowering and inspiring women to stand up and ASK for what they want. Be it salary, promotion opportunities or more flexible work practises.

In our experience the 1st stumbling block is not a manager or organisation saying no to a request..... it is the assumption that many women make: that the answer will be no.

If this sounds familiar, it's time to collect the courage, build the value stack and ask for what you know you deserve. **But, before you do, here are a few tips to set yourself up for success.**



7 things to do BEFORE asking for a payrise

01 Start early – timing is everything

If you are like most people, a salary negotiation or request starts when the decision is made. Typically, performance reviews come around and if salary reviews are linked to these conversations at the end or perhaps a few weeks after, you are handed a letter which tells you the approved salary for the following year. Decision made, letter typed.... not a conversation but a result. At this point even

if you shout and scream or have the best business case in the world, it is very hard for anyone to advocate further increases on your behalf because the pot of money has been divided with nothing left. That said, even if this is the case, I always believe there is a way to access additional remuneration/reward, you and your leader just have to get creative and find the 'fat' in the budget.

Speaking of budgets, it is around this time of the year, when budgets are being set, negotiated and agreed, that you'd want to open up the salary dialogue. Before performance reviews and discussions with HR departments or other executives even start. Note, we said a salary dialogue which means a two way conversation.



02 Preparation

You would not walk into a presentation or a customer pitch unprepared so don't walk into a conversation with your boss unprepared. People who do prepare have a better chance of getting what they are asking for without the need to negotiate.



03 Get clear on what you are asking for

Is it a pay rise? If so how much explicitly are you asking for? Know this in terms of percentages of base salary and total dollars as both currencies matter. Is it a title change or progression opportunity? Sometimes negotiating this can have more benefits for your future career and may be easier for your boss to agree to. It can also lay the platform for a stronger salary negotiation down the track.

Determine the best-case scenario (challenge yourself with this one as in my experience

women are often underselling themselves here)? What is fair given your contribution and value and the circumstances of the organisation? And finally, what would be the worst-case scenario and what options are available to you if this is the result. Clarity here will ensure you communicate with confidence when asked about your expectations.

When it comes to identifying salary ranges and benchmarks, there is limited data available publicly that you can rely on. My suggestions

are to look at the following and use them as a frame of reference when determining market rates.

- Salary Guides available online from recruiters
- <https://www.glassdoor.com.au/Salaries/index.htm>
- Feedback from trusted recruiters or salaries of similar roles that you may be approached to apply for



04 The Value Stack - Understand and articulate your value

This is all about the business case for a salary increase. If all you have is an expectation of a pay rise for doing the same thing you have been doing for the past 12 months, forget it. The days of those pay rises are gone or in my view should be. Instead, think about your contribution and value from the following 3 aspects

Success so far

What contribution have you made towards the success of the organisation, team, customers in the past 12 months. Be specific and communicate the explicit value. What did you do, what impact did it have on relevant stakeholders and how specifically did it add value to the organisation?

Above & Beyond

What have you been doing that is above and beyond the core role that you are paid to do? Typically we are hired to do a role defined in a job description and most of us who are achievers and ambitious evolve that well beyond these expectations. When we negotiate salary we negotiate deliverables. The ability to show that you are contributing more than what is expected builds the value stack for a remuneration increase.

Value Ahead

What are you already focused on and committed to when it comes to delivering value for the

organisation in the next 12 months. In what way are you contributing to the success of the organisation in the future?

Understanding and clearly articulating your value in these 3 ways means that when it comes to negotiation and recognition, the focus is on what you have done, what you have done above and beyond (and essentially are not remunerated for) and what you will do.

I hope it goes without saying but I will explicitly say that when talking about the future you are not giving ultimatums but rather confidently communicating your role in the organisation's success.



05 Own it

Step 4 should provide rock solid evidence about how amazing you are and why you are worth every cent you are asking for and more. It is important that when you open the conversation with your boss to discuss salary or whatever you are negotiating for, you have 100% belief and confidence in who you are and the value you bring to the organisation. We call this Core Confidence...100% Unshakeable Unbreakable Confidence.



06 Communicate that value

Preparation done, it's time to front up, back yourself and ask for what you are worth. Ideally draft a brief 1 pager that talks about your Value Stack. This will allow two things:

- it will remind you to cover all the points and help you structure the conversation, and
- it gives your boss a written and visual reminder of what was covered (essential for those who have a visual preference for processing information).

This is incredibly important if your boss is not the decision maker and will need to go and advocate on your behalf to have the salary increase, promotion etc approved.



07 Agree next steps and timeframes

I have seen clients put all that effort into building a strong business case and then go months without hearing anything. Get agreement about what needs to happen next, i.e. who is making the decision, how long it will take, what, if any, additional information is required. Most importantly, agree on a timeframe for when you will regroup to discuss (2-3 weeks is normally more than enough time). If you never bring the conversation up again they have been let off the hook and, unconsciously, you are sending a message that the conversation and outcome is not important to you.

A few don'ts...

- Don't negotiate a pay rise if you have already decided to leave in 3 or 6 mths. This is a personal opinion but asking your boss to go in and advocate for you and then slapping them in the face with a resignation letter months later lacks integrity.
- Don't accept a new role without agreeing the appropriate remuneration...I have seen it take 6 months for people to come to an agreement around salary. It can be tempting but your organisation (and boss) is leveraged when they need to fill the role. A quick game is a good game. Get clear around what remuneration is appropriate and move forward with the discussion.
- Don't ask for a pay rise for no reason.....the fact you have been doing the job for 12 months more does not equal value. A payrise is not an entitlement, put the effort in to understand your value and communicate that. If you are not contributing value chances are you are in the wrong job.
- Don't ask for unrealistic or unfair requests. An employee/employer relationship is about give and take. The relationship must always feel like it is in good exchange. When I say that, what I mean is what you give as an employee (time, creative thought, leadership, care, knowledge...



your brilliant self) is equal to what the organisation provides (salary, development opportunities, social connection, flexibility etc). There is no exact science here, but if it feels equal, it is, and if not, a good question to ask yourself is - 'What would I need to either receive from my organisation or stop giving to my organisation to make the exchange balanced?

- Don't give up! If the 1st answer is a No or is below your expectations it's OK to feel disappointed. Retreat, recover and refocus. Get creative about other reward or recognition opportunities, and/or look at establishing an interim outcome with agreement to revisit the conversation in 6 months time.

No means not yet.



If you are frustrated with your progress to date, professionally and or personally and would like to understand how we can help you accelerate results so that you make more money, have more meaning, and experience more freedom then contact me at kate@ypwa.com.au.