

# Negotiating The Numbers--Nine Notes ©

by Judy Feld

So...it's time for you to get a raise! But...we know times are tough, jobs seem scarce, the economic climate is down, etc. etc. In 2007 projected pay increases in the U.S and Canada will average 3.7%, according to Mercer Human Resource Consulting in New York. Should you even ask for a raise? We say "Yes"...and here are some tips for increasing the probability of a successful outcome:

## **1. Wear your negotiating hat.**

Asking for a raise (and other salary discussions) are a form of negotiation and should be treated as such...with all of the skills you bring to other important negotiations.

## **2. Don't declare war.**

Don't draw a line in the sand. Don't threaten. It is important to approach your salary discussion as a friendly, professional experience, and expect a win-win outcome.

## **3. Style/Approach counts.**

Understand the communications style of the person you are dealing with...and also his or her level of authority and ability to make a decision. For example, some decision makers require a lot of documentation and detailed analysis, while others prefer to move quickly to the bottom line. Some encourage a personal chat; others want to spend minimal time in conversation.

## **4. Don't lose it.**

Keep your tone of voice, facial expression and body language neutral and professional. If you get emotional, you lose. Remain calm, and remember: this is business, don't take it personally.

## **5. Document your value.**

Understand the bottom line impact to your company of what you have accomplished...and what you plan to accomplish. If your bottom line impact is more indirect than direct...draw a diagram that leads to the money--really! Help your boss see the importance of keeping you happy--and be prepared with responses to his or her objections. Be well-organized.

## **6. Don't be afraid to ask.**

If you follow these suggestions the interaction will be pleasant and respectful, regardless of the outcome. You won't lose your job because you ask for a raise.

## **7. Understand your current market value.**

Do comparative salary research to get the fair market value for your function/position/responsibilities/geography. Keep these figures as a back-up in your negotiating--if they are favorable to your position.

## **8. Know and communicate company priorities.**

Know the current priorities, values and challenges of your company--and emphasize those of your accomplishments that align with the most important priorities.

## **9. Be creative.**

Consider asking for rewards other than a higher salary, such as additional vacation, a company car, a bonus, stock options, fewer hours, flex-time, etc.

## **And...one more tip: practice, practice, practice**

Ask a friend or family member (not a company colleague) to play the part of your boss as you ask for your raise. It helps.

## **~~Coach's Comment~~**

There's one more important piece of advice about negotiations in general that my clients often hear from me in a variety of circumstances: "Don't negotiate with yourself." What does this mean? If you make a first offer, and it is rejected by the other party, don't then make a second offer without some favorable movement by the other side. If you make two offers in a row, you are negotiating with yourself.

## **~~Media Notes~~**

**I was interviewed for an article that appeared in Smart Money Magazine: The Wall Street Journal Magazine of Personal Business. The title is "Just Rewards--Expert advice on how to negotiate a better raise." Here's an excerpt from the article:**

>>>Your job doesn't directly affect your firm's profits? Note your indirect impact. "If you're in human resources, show how you designed and implemented incentive programs that motivated the sales force to work

harder," says Judy Feld, an executive and career coach in Dallas.

### Salary's Not Everything

Your manager may not be able to bypass strict salary limits, but there could be other incentives. Five years ago 48 percent of companies awarded spot bonuses. Today 53 percent do, and another 8 percent are considering it, according to Mercer. Feld advises clients to ask for bonuses, vacation time or other benefits in addition to raises. "That gives them a fallback position, something the company can say yes to," she says.

One of her clients, a manager at a chemical company in Colorado, knew she wouldn't get a raise due to the economic climate. So she asked to squeeze her work week into four days, and her firm agreed.<<<

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### Topical Quote

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**"The fellow who says he'll meet you halfway usually thinks he's standing on the dividing line."**

**~~~Orlando A. Battista**

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