



Careercasts
by Careersthatdentsuck.com

A Career Coach In Your Mailbox

Since you gotta work...

Is There A Pay Raise On Your Wish List?

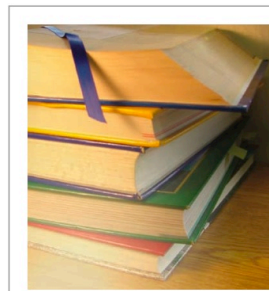
Santa's likely buried under reams of wish lists by now. Most of us will get at least some of what we want, whether that's electronics, clothing or jewelry.

But, there's one gift that even old Saint Nick may have trouble delivering...a pay raise.

Don't fault the old guy. I'm sure he'll give it his best holiday try. But, with employers' concerns about the flailing economy, even that may not be enough to pry a raise from your employer's, er, um, cautious hand (No one said Scrooge! Did you say Scrooge?).

Many of you will need a holiday miracle to get a few dollars more in your pay checks. In the spirit of the season, let's be honest. Some of you have been too naughty to deserve a raise this year (Santa will deliver your lump of coal). Some of you were unlucky enough to work for an employer that had a rough year (If your employer is part of the do-

mestic auto industry or the mortgage industry, this probably applies to you). And, some of you simply work for miserly Scrooges (That's right. I said it.).



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The good news is that most of these obstacles either don't apply to the CareerCasts' productive and conscientious readers or can be overcome. The bad news is that these three obstacles are merely speed bumps.

The real obstacles standing between you and your pay raise are far more formidable, though not unconquerable if you're well-prepared.

The first obstacle is information. Most of us approach our quest for a pay raise

with too little information to get the job done. Let's change that!

Getting the Pay Raise You Want!

1. Get out of your own way!

- 🔊 Your performance is the biggest determinant of whether or not you receive a pay raise.
- 🔊 The single best argument you can make on your own behalf is that you've done a good job.
- 🔊 If you haven't done your best work this year, regroup and go for the raise next year.

2. Learn the formula

- 🔊 Several factors affect whether you'll receive a raise. The first is, as above, your performance.
- 🔊 Every company is different, but each has its own set of criteria for granting pay raises.
- 🔊 Factors include:
 - Seniority
 - Your pay rate relative to peers in the same position
 - Where you are in the pay range (If you are paid the maximum rate of the range for your position, you'll

need to get promoted in order to earn a pay raise).

- The date and amount of your last pay raise
- Your company's performance standards and expectations (The performance criteria on your performance review)
- Your performance review cycle
- Your company's bonus or incentive plan

3. Make a "business case"

- 🔊 Getting a raise is very important...to you. Put aside your emotions to convince your boss that your getting a raise is good for the business.
- 🔊 Your business case should address your performance (especially the work that has generated revenue for the company) and all of your company's criteria.
- 🔊 Schedule a meeting with your supervisor to present your well-organized business case. If that's not possible, prepare a well-written memo.
- 🔊 If you're forced to submit the memo, ask for an in-person meeting and tell your boss the date on which you'll follow up with her.

4. Be prepared for the answer

If the answer's "Yes", you're all set. But, be prepared for "Maybe" and "No" (neither one is better than the other).

If "Maybe" or "No", ask your boss to explain her reservations. Then, put them to rest by reiterating your business case (heavy emphasis on the value you've added to her team and the company overall).

If your boss seems committed to "No", bargain! I suggest: "If not now, what about...?" or "If I can accomplish ____, will you reconsider?"

5. Don't Lose the War

- Don't let your emotions overtake you. Not getting a raise may be upsetting, but it's not worth ruining your career.
- Soften the blow by preparing for the worst. My personal strategy is to prepare other options--apply for promotions or transfers to higher-paying jobs, start a search for a new job or look for a part-time job to supplement my income.
- Don't give up! Fix the issues your boss identified, then ask again.

Learn why your employer may not have a pay raise under the tree for you. Read "Pry A Pay Raise From Your Employer's Cautious Hand" at CareersThatDontSuck.com.



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