



Norland
Know-Hows
Negotiating salaries

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When you live and work directly with your employer, negotiating a higher salary or change in contract can feel daunting and awkward, for both you and your employer.

Below are some tips and suggestions for how best to navigate this:

- Do your preparation. What is the market research telling you? What do you think might be a reasonable rate of pay? Are current relations with your employer and their children good? How long have you worked for them? Why do you think you are worth the extra money? Have you undertaken any additional training since you started your employment with them? What have your achievements in the job been? Being prepared will help you when you are questioned or asked to justify the raise, as well as helping you to organise your thoughts.
- Think about why you want the raise: recognition? Because you have more experience? Because you are working more hours?
- Be clear about what you are asking for so that your employer understands your position.
- Think about how you will respond if the answer is no. Are you prepared to walk away?
- Once you feel prepared, ask for a mutually convenient time to discuss the matter. This should be arranged for a time when the children won't be around, so that the subject can be discussed professionally and without interruption. It helps if you already have time scheduled like this where you catch up with your employer about things in general.
- Have in your mind a non-confrontational and relaxed opening statement, so that you come across as confident and avoid an awkward start. Make it positive – for instance, how much you enjoy working for the family.
- Think before you speak, and try not to come across as demanding or entitled. If you are reasonable and measured, your employer will be more likely to consider your request seriously. Instead of saying “I need” or “I want”, use phrases like “I would be more comfortable with ...”.
- Be prepared to be flexible. If the family cannot afford an increase, would you consider a change of hours or holiday entitlement? What if you were asked to work more hours?
- Don't use threats or issue ultimatums, as this will only antagonise your employer and make them feel pressurised.
- Don't be afraid to ask for time to think about any offers.
- Listen to what your employer is saying to you and try to empathise appropriately. Jumping in without taking on board what has been said will lead to conflict.
- If your employer is reluctant or says no, do not take it personally. It is not necessarily a comment on your performance; there might be lots of other things going on for the family that you are not aware of. Be gracious about your employer's response and then consider your next steps in private.