

## STRATEGIES AND SCRIPTS: HOW TO REPLY TO PAY RAISE OBJECTIONS

Today, you're continuing to **build rock-solid confidence** by way of **thorough preparation** for the pay raise conversation.

When you're faced with an objection to your raise request from your manager, how do you keep the pay raise conversation going? That's the topic of this lesson.

Even when your manager *wants* to give you a raise, s/he might have objections related to *legitimate obstacles* to granting it.

On the other hand, there may be no obstacles to signing off on your salary increase, yet you might get objections which are actually *smokescreen excuses*.

If you can discern between those two types of objections *before* your meeting, you'll be able to illuminate hidden agendas. And surfacing those agendas guides you in developing your negotiation strategy and replies.

In this lesson, I'm going to provide you with four steps for dealing with virtually any objection you get from your manager. To go along with those steps, you'll find a bonus resource, a PDF with several pages of scripted replies to common objections.

There's also a worksheet that has you anticipating *your* manager's objections and writing out your own replies. Use my scripts as a springboard for your custom-crafted responses. Make them sound like *your* voice, how *you* speak.

As you craft your replies, keep in mind your communication style, your negotiation style, your manager's personality and needs, and your employer's culture.

But whatever your manager's response, maintain a collaborative frame of mind, not a combative one. As you develop your replies, use a problem-solving tone, not a pleading one. Take the principled negotiation approach we addressed earlier.

That's the approach which aims to meet the needs of both parties, where you ask questions and explore mutual interests and needs. The goal is to move the negotiation along to a mutually-agreeable outcome.

Here are my four steps to guide you in dealing with anticipated objections.

**1. Get acknowledgment from your manager of the *merits* of granting the raise, even though she contends there are reasons it can't be granted.**

Your initial response to any stated reason for denying your raise is to obtain your manager's acknowledgment that s/he would otherwise grant you the increase. For example:

*What I hear you saying is that, you would grant a 5% pay increase if it weren't for the budget constraints. Is that correct?*

Then pause and wait for the response. Assuming your manager is being straightforward, you would respond with something like:

*Thank you. I appreciate your recognition of the value I'm bringing to the job.*

This acknowledgment by your manager of your professional worth, and worthy of the requested remuneration, is crucial. Why? Because it sets the stage for Step 2, to move forward with reframing the pay increase issue or for engaging your manager in a collaborative, problem-solving negotiation of the options you generated earlier.

Which brings us to Step 2.

**2. Be prepared to reframe the raise objection, to ask questions, and to negotiate your options.**

This is the core of your negotiation. **How well you do at this juncture correlates with the degree of your preparation.**

Let me remind you that the best negotiated outcomes are a result of the preparation that happens *before* the meeting. The amount of follow through you've put into this training so far shows up here. Whether you've been merely consuming the content, or you've been methodical and diligent in doing the work required, it'll be revealed at this point.

A recap of what that looks like: identify and assess your manager's interests; develop options; reframe the issues; anticipate objections; ask clarifying questions; and rehearse, rehearse, rehearse the meeting. **Completing all the steps in the Pay Raise Process is a greater predictor of a successful outcome than what happens in the meeting itself.**

### 3. Be prepared to negotiate to negotiate.

What I mean is, be prepared to ask your manager if you can revisit the issue. This tactic keeps the conversation going, especially if #2 that I just mentioned hits a roadblock. It's a way to fend off an outright refusal or a final "no." It sounds something like this:

- *"May I have a better understanding of [the stated reason behind the objection]?"*
- *"May I have a better understanding of the budget cycle so I can improve the timing of my request?"*
- *"May I have a better understanding of how the budget is set to reward employee performance?"*
- *"May I have a better understanding of how our senior vice president determines our team's rewards and raises?"*

Take notes as s/he provides you with more specifics.

- *I'd like to take your concerns into consideration and modify my request. Would you be willing to take another look in [time frame]?*

Use the words that match the issue and that are natural for you. It's frustrating to be stalled, but it's better than giving up! As long as the discussion continues, the possibility of getting what you're pursuing remains.

### 4. Rehearse your scripted replies to each of the anticipated objections.

Even if you can't recall the exact wording when you're in the meeting with your manager, *your repetitive practice imprints onto your mind the essence* of the response. As a result, you'll be able to respond readily and confidently when faced with each objection. Content plus confidence move you toward the outcome you want.

**ACTION STEP:** Anticipate and prepare for your manager's objections. Write them all down, then develop and practice your response to each of them. There's a worksheet with this lesson to get you started. Use the bonus resource of scripted replies as a springboard for crafting your custom responses.