

The four common mistakes to AVOID when asking your boss for a pay rise - and why timing is everything

- Australian women are paid more than 15 per cent less than their male colleagues
- Two workplace experts share tips for getting a 'yes' to your salary raise request
- Timing is everything and focus on the value you add to the business
- Consider alternative benefits, such as health insurance or flexible working hours
- Do your research and keep up to date with current competitive market rates

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Asking for a pay rise is a task that makes the vast majority of us squirm in our seats.

But while the prospect of knocking on your bosses door to chat about salary is unappealing, it seems it is more important than ever for women to do so - as [official government statistics](#) reveal that the Australian gender pay gap stands at a staggering 15.3 per cent.

This means that on average, Australian women are receiving over 15 per cent less income than their male counterparts.

In Western Australia, that gap has widened to 22.5 per cent.



The gender pay gap between Australian men and women is an average of 15.3 per cent across the nation

So how should we start preparing for the dreaded 'can I have a raise' conversation?

Romy Newman, CEO and President of women's career advice platform **Fairygodboss**, told **MyDomaine** that she believes women need to become more aggressive and persistent about asking for salary reviews.

'The more women ask for raises, the more we'll get paid and the narrower the pay gap will get,' she wrote in an article on **LinkedIn**.

Melbourne-based author and facilitator **Karen Gately** agrees about being assertive, telling **FEMAIL** that you must 'own the outcome' of your request whatever it may be.

Here, **FEMAIL** has rounded up the best pieces of advice from these two businesswomen.

What is the Gender Pay Gap?

The gender pay gap is defined as the difference between women's and men's average weekly full-time equivalent earnings, expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

It is a measure of women's overall position in the paid workforce and does not compare like roles.





Author, speaker, advisor and facilitator Karen Gately (pictured) says that we should pick our battles when it comes to salary negotiation

1. 'It's been years since I was given a raise'

Ms Newman cautions that it can set the conversation on the wrong footing by opening with this line.

The expert told MyDomaine that the concept of annual raises have fallen by the wayside in a huge number of companies, rendering this opener useless.

Instead, the businesswoman recommends highlighting the value that you bring to the company to justify your request.

'It would be far better to show what your material contributions have been to the business and what you plan to contribute in the future,' she explained.

If your manager still says no: Karen Gately says that this is the time to demonstrate commitment to learning and getting better at your job.

'Optimise your productivity and your employer is more likely to see the value you add and agree to give you a pay rise in the future.'



Know your worth: careers advice experts are urging women to do their research, stay informed and not to be afraid of speaking up when they feel they deserve a salary increase

2. 'I know you're in a rush but..'

As with everything in life, timing is everything when it comes to salary negotiation.

Ms Newman reminds that the process of securing a salary raise is not likely to happen during one conversation.

She suggests scheduling a meeting with your manager, laying out the evidence to support your request and developing a plan of action together to make this happen within a specific time frame, e.g. six months.

The Fairygodboss CEO says that it is never a good idea to surprise your manager with an abrupt or untimely discussion.

If your manager still says no: Ms Gately advises not to allow 'fear of further rejection to stop you from putting your hand up again, when the time is right'.

By showing your superior that you are invested in the business, committed to the success of your team and focused on their needs first and foremost, you are laying the foundation for a raise to be positively considered.



Showing respect for and understanding of your manager's workload demonstrates your investment in the business as a whole

3. 'My colleague earns more than me'

While it's important to stand up for yourself if you feel that you are being underpaid, Ms Newman cautions against discussing the pay of coworkers.

Equal pay for equal work may seem like a black and white issue, but Romy Newman reminds that there are always external factors such as past experience, geographic location or travel time and internal versus external hiring which can affect salary grades.

Rather than appearing childish and centring your case on 'this is not fair', the career advice expert suggests treating your ask as a business transaction by answering the question 'why should the company invest more in you?'

If your manager still says no: 'Ask for feedback about ways in which you can contribute more and increase your value to the business,' Ms Gately says.

If your employer simply can't afford to pay you more, consider whether there are other benefits you would also value, the author continued.

Examples include increased flexibility in your work schedule, additional leave days or further training.



Asking for feedback will not only improve your performance, it shows willingness to learn

4. 'I'm buying a house - I need a raise'

Unfortunately, changes to personal life do not justify a salary raise in themselves.

Ms Newman says that life events are not a valid argument for either yourself or the manager representing you to make in negotiation.

Instead of getting caught up in unrealistic personal issues, Romy Newman recommends keeping the conversation about your performance and the value you add to the business.

'Keep this about a transaction: what are you offering, and why is it worthwhile for the company to invest more money in you.'

If your manager still says no: Karen Gately also reminds that you must be reasonable about your expectations.

'There is a ceiling to what most employers will be willing to pay for a particular role.

Do your research. Talk to people like recruiters who are able to give you accurate insight to what you can expect to earn doing your job with your level of experience,' Ms Gately advised. This way, you can approach the conversation differently at a later date.



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Karen Gately says we must be reasonable about our expectations

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