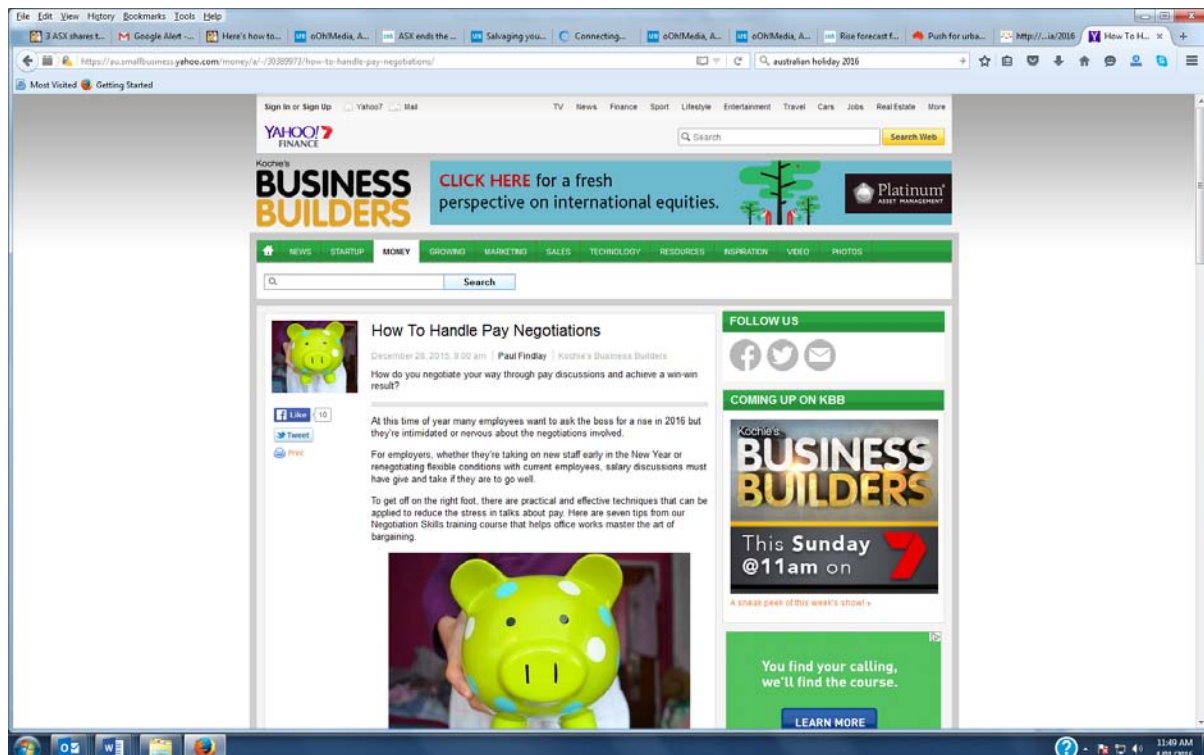


Kochie's Business Builders



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How To Handle Pay Negotiations

December 28, 2015, 9:00 am Paul Findlay Kochie's Business Builders

How do you negotiate your way through pay discussions and achieve a win-win result?

At this time of year many employees want to ask the boss for a rise in 2016 but they're intimidated or nervous about the negotiations involved.

For employers, whether they're taking on new staff early in the New Year or renegotiating flexible conditions with current employees, salary discussions must have give and take if they are to go well.

To get off on the right foot, there are practical and effective techniques that can be applied to reduce the stress in talks about pay. Here are seven tips from our Negotiation Skills training course that helps office workers master the art of bargaining.

Develop the skills for successful negotiating

Ten must-have skills are effective speaking, effective listening, a sense of humour, a positive attitude, respect, self-confidence, emotional intelligence, persistence, patience and creativity.

Without them, negotiations will be difficult if not impossible. It's necessary to establish what you are looking for while understanding what the other party will be happy with. An atmosphere of respect is essential. If you do not make concessions while demanding them from your counterpart, the negotiation will end in dissatisfaction.

Employees must prepare their case well

If you're going for a new job or a pay rise, strengthen your bargaining position by researching comparable salaries for similar positions in the marketplace. Be clear about what you're prepared to accept. Maintain your self-confidence.

Don't settle for less than you feel is fair. Good negotiators understand the importance of balance - you'll have to make concessions.

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Stay positive

Negotiations can become fraught so having the ability to see another point of view while being sanguine about what you can achieve is essential. Listen to what the employer is offering. If it's less than what you hoped for, put a counter offer about the value you bring.

If the initial answer is no, don't give up; keep talking. Before starting, agree on which issues are up for negotiation and which are non-negotiable.

Try for a home ground advantage

People feel most comfortable conducting a negotiation on their home turf. Most have a particular time of day when they feel most alert and clear-headed. Try to influence the time and place if you want to build an advantage in negotiations.

Try to avoid a noisy setting with frequent interruptions and lack of privacy.

Put yourself in the other person's shoes

Negotiations are about mutual gain so be flexible. Employees should think seriously about what the employer wants. In a retail environment, the boss will be interested in increasing sales and retaining customers.

Employers like stretch targets. The employee must ask 'am I willing to back myself to do better?' You could push for a smaller rise on your base and a share of increased sales. That's a win-win.

Consider the full compensation package

If your pay demands are met by a brick wall, negotiate on conditions and benefits. Consensus may have a bittersweet taste for some parties, but it is better to have 50 per cent of something than 100 per cent of nothing. Understand that you must get the best deal possible in a way that is acceptable to the other party.

Make sure the agreement is in writing.

Control your emotions

Use your emotional intelligence. If the temperature is heating up or you've hit an impasse, take a break if you can. There's little benefit in allowing a negative atmosphere to build up and torpedo negotiations at a delicate stage.

Stay polite - it never reduces your argument. Be firm – it removes perceptions of weakness. Keep calm – it facilitates persuasion and compromise.

Paul Findlay is Managing Director of [PD Training](#), one of Australia's leading professional development companies that delivers more than 4,000 courses in the workplace and online via a 1,000 strong network of trainers.