
DISCUSSION GUIDE

Negotiation Bootcamp

Activities and advice from
Women in the Workplace 2017 and LeanIn.Org

Overview

This guide takes you step-by-step through planning your negotiation. Each step is based on findings from [the *Women in the Workplace 2017* report](#) and data compiled by Professor Ashleigh Shelby Rosette in [LeanIn.Org's "Negotiation" video series](#). Research shows that people who rehearse their negotiation beforehand get better results—so by completing these activities, you're setting yourself up for success.

Individually or as a group, read the [Negotiation Primer](#) produced as part of *Women in the Workplace 2017*. Then complete the exercises below to create a script for your negotiation and practice it with a partner or your Lean In Circle.

The exercises focus on negotiating for a raise or a promotion, but you can use these general rules to negotiate for other requests, like more time off or a change in your schedule.

Meeting guide

🕒 **Meeting time:** approx. 40-45 minutes

Activity 1: Do your research

👥 Group or pair activity

🕒 5–10 minutes

In salary negotiations, people who specify a raise amount receive on average more money than those who don't, as noted in our primer. Arm yourself with research: find out the standard salaries for your industry and role. And aim high. You can always come down from a high goal, but it's hard to ask for more once your first offer has been made, [according to Lean In's video, "It Pays To Negotiate"](#) by Professor Rosette.

With your Circle or with a partner, share your best practices for research. Which websites have you used? Did you ask people in your network? Did you have trouble coming up with a specific ask?

Use the space below to take notes:

Activity 2: Write your script

 30 minutes

Step 1: Plan an opener that promotes good feeling

 Individual activity

 2 minutes

Positive emotions are contagious. By contrast, a negative or even a neutral approach can trigger a defensive response, [according to Professor Rosette](#).

Write down a conversation opener that generates positive emotions. Acknowledge your boss's time and presence. You might say, "Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me. I've been looking forward to our conversation and I'm glad we have this chance to talk."

Your opener: _____

Step 2: Prepare your best pitch

 Individual activity

 5 minutes

Our research shows that women and men who successfully negotiate for a raise (or a promotion, for that matter) are more likely to make the case that they have taken these steps:

- Demonstrated that they are a high performer
- Taken on a greater workload
- Taken on the responsibilities of the next level

To make your case stronger, complete the following sentences:

- In the past year, I have contributed to our organization's core goals by _____

- I have exceeded expectations by _____

- I have taken on a greater workload than expected in _____

- I have taken on the responsibilities of the next level by _____

Step 3: Write your pitch

 Individual activity

 10 minutes

- Write a pitch that includes your best, most measurable achievements. Draw on your statements in **Step 2**. Make sure to include your raise amount or other specific ask. Here is an example:
- “I feel really great about what my team has achieved this year. We’ve grown web traffic by thirty percent. And I’ve taken on extra responsibilities in training new hires. With that in mind, I’d like to ask for a ten percent raise to reflect industry standards and match my expanded role.”

Your pitch: _____

Step 4: Edit your pitch from your boss’s point of view

 Individual activity

 5 minutes

Women who ask for raises are more likely than men to be perceived as “bossy” and “intimidating,” according to our findings in *Women in the Workplace*. But you can overcome these stereotypes by thinking communally and focusing on your boss’s needs, as [Professor Rosette explains in her video, “Negotiation Part 4: Thinking Communally.”](#)

- Think about the goal your boss cares about most: Is it sales, customer satisfaction, productivity, or something else?
- Go back and look at your script. See if you can edit it so that each sentence speaks to your boss’s core goal.
 - For example, if you worked long hours but your boss cares about sales, don’t say, “I worked overtime throughout the year.” Instead, say, “My sales numbers grew X amount after I began working Y more hours each week.”
- You may have included personal reasons for needing a raise. Edit those out!
 - Instead, make the case that your work is worth more to your company than they are currently paying you. You might say, “My role has expanded beyond my job title, since I’ve done X and Y [core company activities], so I’d love to figure out a raise that matches my increased responsibilities that contribute to our core mission.”

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- When possible, say “we” instead of “I.” Look at the example script from **Step 3**, which models using “we” and “our” as well as “I.”

Your rewritten pitch: _____

Step 5: Anticipate a challenging response

 Individual activity

 10 minutes

Imagine the objections your boss might make and plan how you would address them. Use positive emotions. Make concessions to your boss’s needs. If you’re asking for time off, you might propose doing extra work at other times or taking on other responsibilities so that your boss feels he or she is gaining something from the negotiation.

Your manager might say:

- “I don’t know, that’s hard for us to do with our current resources.”

You might respond:

- “I understand where you’re coming from. But if you look at the additional revenue my team has brought in this year, we’re on track to exceed our goals by fifty percent. A ten percent raise reflects both my market value and the results I can bring to our team. I would love to see what figure we can agree on that is closer to that number.”

Your response: _____

Activity 3: Practice the conversation

 12 minutes

There's evidence that planning and rehearsing your negotiation with another person makes you more likely to get a raise.

Step 1: Do a body language check

 Group or pair activity

 2 minutes

Are your arms crossed? Are you leaning toward the group or away? What's your facial expression? Try changing your body language to signal positive emotions. Do you feel different? How does your reaction change when you see members of the group do the same?

- Share some of your reactions in pairs or with your Circle.
- In **Step 2**, remember to smile and use open body language: nod, uncross your arms, and face your negotiation partner.

Step 2: Rehearse your script

 Pair activity

 10 minutes

If you're doing these activities with your Circle, break into pairs. Use this script:

- **Partner 1 (the “employee”)**: Make your opening statement as written above. Present the edited pitch you wrote in **Activity 2**.
- **Partner 2 (the “boss”)**: Respond, “I don't know, that's hard for us to do with our current resources” or “I'm inclined to say no, since you're relatively new here.”
- **Partner 1**: Follow up by offering solutions or reasons why it benefits the company.
- **Partner 2**: Provide feedback. Start by telling your partner what she did well. Then make suggestions, if you have any, for what she might do differently.

Then switch roles and repeat.

Congratulations!

You've written and rehearsed a negotiation script based on the latest research findings. You are now better prepared than most people for a successful negotiation.

About *Women in the Workplace 2017*

This negotiation guide draws on new research from [Women in the Workplace 2017](#), a comprehensive study of the state of women in corporate America based on pipeline data from 222 companies employing 12 million people. To our knowledge, it's the largest study of its kind.

Learn more

To broaden your toolkit even further, check out our [video series on negotiation](#) from Ashleigh Shelby Rosette, professor of management and organizations at Duke University.