

# 11 Words and Phrases to use in Salary Negotiations if you want to Succeed

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Wouldn't it be great if there were a magic word you could say in order to get people to agree with you? If, for example, a simple utterance of "abracadabra" could instantly convince your employer to see things your way, salary negotiations would be a whole lot easier.

Unfortunately, we live in the real world, and those magic words that guarantee instant success don't quite exist — but the good news is, we've got the next best thing. The following words and phrases are expert-level ways to demonstrate the confidence, congeniality, and knowledge necessary to secure a higher salary. Use these in your next negotiation, and you might just see a bump in your paycheck sooner than you can say "alakazam."

## 1. "I am excited by the opportunity to work together."

Too often, people think of salary negotiation as a battle: you, trying to get as much as you possibly can, versus your employer, trying to stay within budget. However, this type of thinking can be counterproductive, explains Roy Cohen, [career coach](#) and author of [The Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide](#).

"Never engage in negotiation as an ultimatum — an either/or — but rather as a collaborative process and a unique opportunity to create a compensation package that makes sense for both you and for them. Establish priorities as to what is most important to you and what items you are willing to trade off," Cohen advises.

### [Salary Negotiation Scripts For Any Job](#)

"Unless you know for sure that you are indispensable, and few of us ever are, successful negotiation should never become adversarial. That is a bad sign that the process has broken down or will," Cohen continues.

## 2. "Based on my research..."

It's only natural to see if you can get a higher salary than the one that you were offered, but it needs to be grounded in reality. Rather than just throwing out a number that you think sounds nice, you need to do your homework on what your skills are worth in order to provide a compelling case for your employer to compensate you accordingly.

"One phrase to use is something along the lines of 'based on my research.' That shows the other person you've done your homework and know what you're talking about when [negotiating](#)," says David Bakke, Writer/Contributor at [Money Crashers](#).

One tip to come to the negotiation table prepared: get a free, personalized salary estimate from Glassdoor's [Know Your Worth™](#) calculator.

## 3. "Market"

As part of your research, make sure you know what the market for your job is, says Labor & Employment Attorney Alex Granovsky of [Granovsky & Sundaresh PLLC](#). "Market refers to what the employee can earn if he or she went out on the job market and found a new, similar position," Granovsky says. "If you are making \$80,000, but could get a job around

the corner making \$100,000, the ‘market’ suggests that you are being underpaid.” And since companies presumably don’t want to lose you to the competition, they take that number seriously.

#### 4. “Value”

Value, on the other hand, “refers to what you bring to your employer,” Granovsky says. “From an employer’s perspective, each employee has to either (1) increase revenue, or (2) increase margin (ideally both). While probably not as compelling as the [job market](#), if you can show to your employer how you are bringing ‘value’ to the company (in the form of increased revenue and/or increased margin), you can make a compelling case for a raise.”

So if, for example, you can prove that a new initiative you implemented earned the company \$100,000, asking for a \$5,000 raise sounds a lot more palatable to your employer.

#### [What’s Your Unique Value Proposition?](#)

#### 5. “Similarly situated employees”

Forget any advice you’ve received about not snooping into your coworkers’ salaries — it can be a powerful data point in negotiations.

“‘Similarly situated employees’ are people who do what you do within the company,” Granovsky says. “If your position is ‘senior account manager’ and every other ‘senior account manager’ is making more money than you, this is something you should explore too.”

While you certainly don’t want to force any of your colleagues to disclose information they’re not comfortable sharing, you can use tools [like Glassdoor](#) to find out what they’re making, and therefore, whether or not you’re [being fairly compensated](#).

#### 6. “Is that number flexible at all?”

If an employer offers a number that’s below your [desired range](#), pushing back is essential — but you want to make sure you handle it with tact. Saying “is that number flexible at all” is a graceful way to “[give] the employer the opportunity to offer more, or even mention other perks you might be able to gain if a higher salary isn’t in the picture,” Bakke says.

#### 7. “I would be more comfortable if…”

Blunt phrasing like “I need” or “I want” can be a turn-off to employers. But expressing your desired salary with this phrase “is a collaborative way to let the recruiter or hiring manager know specifically what you’re looking for so they can focus on that dimension of your job offer,” says [Josh Doody](#), author of [Fearless Salary Negotiation](#).

“The rest of this sentence should be a specific ask. For example, the rest of this sentence might be ‘...we can settle on a base salary of \$60,000.’ or ‘...we can increase the [Restricted Stock Unit](#) allotment to 100 units.’ Contrast this with something like, ‘Do you have any wiggle room?’, which is vague and allows them to say ‘No’ and short-circuit the negotiation,” Doody continues.

## 8. “If you can do that, I’m on board.”

We’ll let you in on a little secret — often times, recruiters are just as anxious as you for [salary negotiations](#) to come to a close. So if you can specifically spell out what it would take for you to accept an offer, you’ll be doing recruiters and hiring managers a favor.

“When you get to this phase of the negotiation, you want to make it clear to the recruiter or hiring manager that saying ‘Yes’ will end the negotiation so they’re more comfortable acquiescing,” Doody says. For example, you may want to say, “I understand you can’t come all the way up to \$60,000. It would be great to add an additional week of paid vacation along with the \$55,000 you suggested. If you can do that, I’m on board,” he suggests.

## 9. “I would prefer not to leave.”

This is a good one for employees who are [negotiating raises](#) to keep in their back pocket. Why? It comes down to the fact that it’s part of a defensible strategy, Cohen says.

“A defensible strategy explains what you want, why you want it, and how it is a win/win for both your boss and for you. The goal is to show value and benefit,” Cohen says. If a low salary at work is truly a dealbreaker for you, “get [an offer](#) that you would be willing to accept, but prefer not to,” Cohen advises. “Tell your boss that you have received an offer, that it is attractive, [but] that you prefer not to leave... It is far cheaper to give you a raise than to recruit and train a new candidate.”

But be warned: this phrase should not be taken lightly. “Know that this is a risky proposition: It could backfire. So please don’t use it if you don’t really want to leave or don’t have a bona fide offer on the table,” Cohen cautions.

### [How to Negotiate Beyond the Raise You Were Offered](#)

## 10. “Do you mind if I take a couple of days to consider your offer?”

Even if a job offer exceeds your expectations, try to play it cool. “The first thing you should do when you receive a job offer is ask for time to consider it,” Doody says. “This little phrase accomplishes several things. Primarily, it buys you time to consider the offer, determine the appropriate counter offer, and begin building your case to support your counter offer. [But] it also enables you to move the negotiation to email if it’s not already there,” Doody says.

This, he says, is a key to successfully pulling off a counter-offer.

“You want to [counter offer over email](#) whenever possible because you can be very deliberate with exactly what you say. Your salary negotiation will be more successful if you carefully choose your counter offer amount and clearly articulate why you’re worth it,” he explains.

## 11. “Thank you.”

Your pleases and thank-yous didn’t stop becoming important once you learned them in preschool — in the business setting, [manners](#) can mean everything.

“At the end of the [salary](#) discussion, be sure to thank the person for taking the time to sit down with you, just to maintain your professionalism,” Bakke says.

Not only is it simply the right thing to do — an employer is much more likely to accommodate the wants and needs of somebody that shows them respect.