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Six Steps To A Super Raise-Even In A Recession

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Everyone loves pay day. We put in our eight hours each day, and look forward to the check that rewards us for our time. But most of us wish that check could be a bit bigger.

You can wish all you want, but to get the raise you're after, you'll need to use more concrete methods than wishing, hoping, or keeping your fingers crossed. Try these six steps to a super raise.

Step One - Understand what you're paid for. You're paid a certain amount per hour or per pay period. That amount is based on how much value you bring to the business. That business has the goal to make a profit.

You are not paid based on how many children you have, or how much your mortgage payment has gone up. Those personal factors have nothing to do with your value to the company. A business is not a charity, a ministry or a family. The more value you bring to the company, the more you are paid. So to get a better raise, you need to find ways to become more valuable.

Step Two - Understand the market value of your job. Use www.salary.com to research how much your job is worth in your area. If just about anyone can do your job, you are paid less. But if you your job requires unique knowledge, education or experience, you are paid more since you are harder to replace. This makes you more valuable to the company.

Step Three - Learn all that you can about the company, and more specifically about your job and

your department. If you have the chance to cross train for another job while someone is on vacation, jump at the chance and learn as much as you can.

Step Four - Be dependable. That means you're on time in the morning, and you're not rushing out early at the end of the day. Complete your assignments on time. Whenever possible, request paid time off well in advance so the company can plan for your absence.

Step Five - Make suggestions on how the company can save money or time. This shows that you're engaged in what you do, you care about the bottom line, and you understand the goals of your department.

Step Six - Talk to your boss. Find out your boss' greatest need or concern, and see what you can do to solve the challenge or at least help to ease it. And ask your boss how you can improve your job performance. Ask about any skills you may be lacking, or any parts of your job where you can do better.

You're at your job 8 hours a day. You can get by, put in your time, and learn to get along with the pay you have. Or you can step up to the plate and add value to your position. Follow these simple steps and you'll add more value to your position. That means you'll be more valuable to the company. And that means the company will be willing to pay more for that value when it's time for your raise. ♦