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## CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATION PHRASES

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For when you know you need to say something, but you're unsure of where to even start.

# A NOTE FROM KATIE



Hello My Friend!

I'm thrilled you've picked up this resource. I've always been labeled as “direct” or “honest” by my coworkers. Admittedly it didn't always feel like a compliment. But also...they weren't wrong.

Asking hard questions, giving necessary feedback or speaking truth to power are all skills that come pretty naturally to me. I chalk it up to having 6 brothers and sisters. You learn to be outspoken pretty quickly. However, being willing or able is very different than being comfortable, and having hard conversations is almost never a comfortable endeavor. In fact, I still often lose sleep over what to say and when.

I have picked up a few key phrases along the way to help you jump into conversations with clarity and confidence. In the pages below you'll find a number of different scenarios and a handful of corresponding phrases to help you the next time you just have to say something. You've got this!

# 34 CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATION PHRASES

*You've got this!!*

## **When asked for your desired salary range during a job interview:**

- 1 "I'd like to learn more about the position and its requirements before discussing salary. Could you provide more details about the role first?"
- 2 "I'm interested in finding a compensation package that aligns with both my skills and the market standards for this position. What range is the company considering for this role?"
- 3 "I'm flexible when it comes to salary, and I'm more focused on the overall fit and growth opportunities within the company. What range does the company typically offer for this type of role?"
- 4 "I'm sure we can come to a fair and competitive salary once we've established that I'm the right candidate for the job. What's the company's budget for this position?"

*These phrases allow you to navigate the salary discussion in a way that ensures you have enough information about the job before providing a specific salary range. It also shows your willingness to find a mutually beneficial compensation package. Remember, it's almost **never** to your advantage to name the first number.*

## Negotiating a Salary and Alternative Benefits:

- 5 "I appreciate the offer, but I was hoping for a salary closer to [desired amount]. Is there room for negotiation?"
- 6 "Based on my experience and qualifications, I was hoping for a salary in the range of [desired range]. Can we discuss this further?"
- 7 "While the salary offer is slightly below my expectations, I wonder if there's flexibility in other areas, such as additional PTO/vacation or a more flexible work schedule. Can we explore these options?"
- 8 "I understand the budget constraints, and I'm open to discussing other forms of compensation, such as performance bonuses or stock options. Can we consider these alternatives?"
- 9 "If the salary range is fixed, could we discuss the possibility of a performance-based bonus structure to bridge the gap?"
- 10 "Is there room to negotiate additional professional development opportunities or educational benefits that could enhance my skill set and long-term value to the company?"
- 11 "While the base salary is important, I'm also interested in work-life balance. Can we discuss options for flexible hours or remote work?"

*We always recommend leading any job offer negotiation with salary first. Do not discuss additional benefits until you're satisfied with the salary and/or you are open to taking a slightly lower salary in exchange for other ancillary benefits. These demonstrate your willingness to be flexible and explore alternatives — ensuring a more comprehensive negotiation process.*

## Asking For A Raise or Title Change

11 "I was hoping to get 30 minutes of your time to discuss my contributions to the business and my current title and compensation."

12 "I've been with the company for [duration], and during that time, I've taken on additional responsibilities outside my job title. I've achieved [specific accomplishments]. I'd like to discuss a raise that reflects my contributions."

13 "I really enjoyed working here and have consistently delivered results that reflect my motivation and commitment to the business. I'd like to explore the possibility of a salary increase to align with my performance and professional growth. I have some details and data on my recent performance if you'd like to review."

14 "In light of my recent accomplishments and my continued willingness to execute responsibilities outside my job title, I'd like to discuss the potential for a title change that better reflects my role and responsibilities."

15 "I've been consistently exceeding expectations in my current position and have taken on new challenges. Can we explore opportunities for career advancement, including both a title change and a salary adjustment?"

*Remember to always come to these discussions prepared with details on your contributions to the business, accommodations you've received as well as any data to back up and support your request.*

## How To Respond When Disappointed By A Raise or Bonus:

16 "I appreciate the raise/bonus, but it's not quite what I was hoping for given my recent performance and contributions. Is there room to discuss this further? I also have some data and details to further show my contributions and how they've impacted the business in a positive way."

17 "I value the recognition and bonus, but I had anticipated a different figure based on my performance these past months. Can we talk about the possibility of adjusting the raise/bonus to better reflect my contributions?"

18 "While I appreciate the raise/bonus, I'd love to discuss any opportunity for adjusting this figure slightly to better reflect my dedication to the business and the results I've generated. I'm also open to discuss other alternative incentives or benefits such as more flexible hours."

*These phrases convey your disappointment while also opening the door for a constructive conversation about the raise or bonus. It's ok to feel disappointed by a bonus. We've all been there. And always remember, the very worst thing that could happen is they would say "no."*

## Giving Feedback to an Employee:

- 19 "I really value your contributions to the team, and I believe there's an opportunity for improvement in [specific area]. Can we discuss and work on this together?"
- 20 "I noticed that [behavior/issue], and I think it would benefit both you and the team if we could address it."
- 21 "The expectation is/was [expectations or standards]. Can we discuss how to get back on track to hit these standards?"
- 22 "I want to provide constructive feedback on [specific task]. Let's discuss how we can enhance your performance in this area."
- 23 "Your efforts are appreciated, but there are areas where we can refine your skills further. I'd like to use the rest of our time here to discuss a plan for improvement."

*Giving a team member constructive feedback can often feel very awkward or tense. But remember that you're doing both of you a favor by being direct. Always remember to follow these meetings up with an email summary of what was discussed.*

## Responding to Criticism or Feedback You Don't Agree With Entirely:

- 24 "I appreciate your feedback, and I'll take some time to reflect on it. Can we schedule a follow-up discussion to explore this further?"
- 25 "I understand your perspective, but I also see it from a different angle. I'd love to share my thoughts and see if we can find mutual understanding and some middle ground."
- 26 "Thank you for sharing your thoughts." (Sometimes keeping it simple is best)
- 27 "I value your input, and I'd like to ensure we both fully understand each other's viewpoints. Can we discuss this in more detail?"

## Initiating a Hard Conversation at Work:

- 28 "I'd love to find 30 minutes on your calendar to discuss an important matter that's been on my mind."
- 29 "I've been thinking about [issue], and I believe it's time for us to have an open and constructive conversation about it."
- 30 "I think it's important for us to have a conversation about [topic]. Can we arrange a meeting to address it directly?"

*I have had the best success sending a meeting request such as this via email rather than face to face. It's much easier to choose your wording and phrases more carefully over email. This initial request sets the stage for the conversations and follow ups to come.*

## Responding When Someone Is Angry with You at Work:

- 31 "I can see that you're upset, and I want to understand what's bothering you. Maybe we should pause for the moment and schedule a follow-up. I'd love for you to share your perspective a little more with me at that time"
- 32 "I'm sorry if my actions or words have caused frustration. Let's address this calmly and find a solution together."
- 33 "I feel badly that this situation upset you. Can we discuss what happened and how we can move forward?"
- 34 "I sense there's tension, and I'd like to resolve it. Could you share your perspective on the situation and then I'll do the same?"

*This is one of the hardest situations to navigate at work. It's rare, but people do lose their tempers and raise their voices at other people in the workplace. First, this is never acceptable or should be considered normal. If someone is obviously angry, the best approach is to keep your cool and try to end the discussion. You can resume it again once both parties are calm.*

## **Bonus Workplace Phrases:**

### **Work Hours and Availability:**

"I'd like to clarify my work hours to ensure we're aligned. I typically work from [start time] to [end time], and I'm unavailable after those hours. Can we make sure this works for the team?"

"I'm dedicated to my role during business hours, but I have personal commitments afterward. If there's a need for me to work outside of those hours, can we discuss it in advance?"

"I'm committed to delivering quality work, but I've found that maintaining a set schedule helps me perform at my best. Can we discuss how to balance expectations and availability?"

### **Managing Workload and Prioritization:**

"I've noticed that my current workload is quite substantial, and I want to ensure I can give each task the attention it deserves. Are there any priorities we can review or tasks we can deprioritize?"

"I'm dedicated to delivering results, but I've reached a point where taking on additional tasks might impact my performance. Can we explore strategies for workload management?"

"I'm concerned that taking on additional tasks may impact the quality and timeliness of my existing responsibilities. Can we review my priorities and what's feasible to get done in my working hours?"

# WHAT'S NEXT?

If you found this helpful, but would like even more guidance and mentoring on confident communication, negotiation, or leadership then consider the Assertive Leadership Network. This monthly membership gives you access to a **full library of leadership training, resources, and weekly LIVE coaching.**

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