

Vet Team Global Stream Conference
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CATALYST Veterinary Professional Coaches

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Express Yourself and the Value You Bring, Effective Negotiation

You don't have to prepare for a battle to negotiate effectively. You do have to prepare, practice and have a plan for mutual gain. Changing how you think about negotiating will help you speak up with confidence. And finally, don't be afraid to ask!

Most people find the thought of negotiating a pay raise or setting a wage nerve-racking at the least. You are doing yourself (and your team) a disservice by low balling your value. Get over the limiting belief, "I'm not in it for the money."

Not negotiating your value can cost you a lot over the course of your career. Tips will include preparation in knowing your value, team wages, the use of silence as a strategic tool, focusing on the issues (not the personalities) and the volley of active listening to keep the conversation moving forward. Finally, identify your walk-away point (what makes or breaks the deal). When moving on, keep your options open, the veterinary community is far too small to burn bridges

Learning Objectives

- Determine local veterinary team wages (BLS.gov)
- Evaluate your value as a knowledgeable, trusted and formally trained team member
- Learn the art of negotiating

Negotiating is Stressful

Let's just get it out there, establishing and negotiating for a salary can be stressful.

A poll by the Society of Human Resource Management found that nearly 80 percent of those surveyed expressed that they didn't like to discuss money or negotiate employment terms. "Female candidates are even more affected by this apprehension," according to Linda Babcock and Sara Laschever, authors of *Women Don't Ask: Negotiation and the Gender Divide*. Babcock and Laschever also found that while 46 percent of men report "always" negotiating their salary, only 30 percent of women do so.

Overcome Limiting Beliefs About Money, Veterinary Practice News, Veterinary Team Insights, March 2018 <https://www.veterinarypracticenews.com/overcome-limiting-beliefs-about-money/>

Limiting Beliefs Statements Exercise, reach out to me for a copy.

Let's look at a 4-part process to negotiating and 4 skills that will build confidence in any negotiation.

Why negotiate for yourself?

Because no one else will!

It starts with belief

Believing that you have value

Believing your time and expertise is worth money

Believing your skills and efforts are valuable

4 Basic steps in Negotiation Process

1) Assess your situation

Can outcome be altered by your influence? Usually, yes, as long as you have prepared and walk in with a win-win proposition.

Schedule a time with your boss when you are fresh and at your best. Do not schedule late in the afternoon when you are dog-tired or at your wits end. That is not setting yourself up for the best outcome from the get-go! Understand your value to the organization and be able to articulate it with confidence and pride.

2) Plan and Prepare

Write out specific goals you want to obtain and by when, realistically. Have a priorities list (we suggest you use a SMART Goal approach-FREE Course!) to understand the project or request from start to finish. Be sure you have researched the Bureau of Labor Statistics for Veterinary Technologist, Veterinarian or Manager to get your local area wages and pertinent information. This is a SUPER resource!

Local and National resources in the Bureau of Labor Statistic

Statistics Veterinary Technicians May 2019 <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes292056.htm>

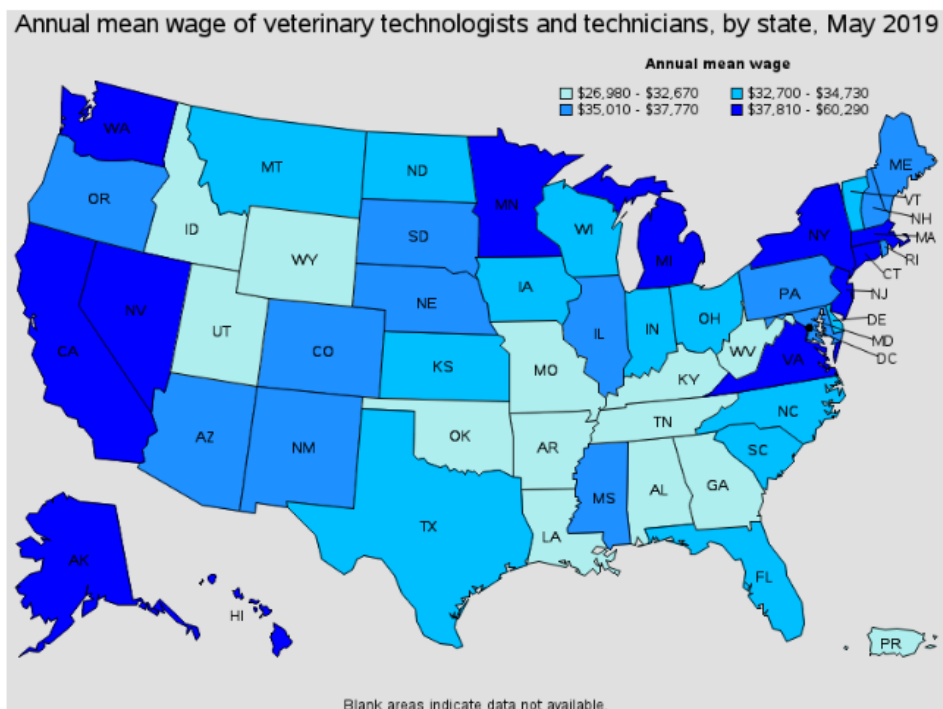
National estimates for this occupation: [Top](#)

Employment estimate and mean wage estimates for this occupation:

Employment (1)	Employment RSE (3)	Mean hourly wage	Mean annual wage (2)	Wage RSE (3)
110,650	1.8 %	\$17.63	\$36,670	0.6 %

Percentile wage estimates for this occupation:

Percentile	10%	25%	50% (Median)	75%	90%
Hourly Wage	\$11.79	\$13.98	\$16.98	\$20.45	\$24.63
Annual Wage (2)	\$24,530	\$29,080	\$35,320	\$42,540	\$51,230



3) Ask

That may sound odd, but have you truly articulated what you want? Many times a team member may feel they asked, but the boss or manager never got that impression. Be succinct in asking. Action is required to start the process. What action do you want to put in motion? In your SMART Goal the “S” is for Specific. Make it perfectly clear and well defined. When asking, stay calm (this can be practiced to keep your nerves-excitement-from getting jittery).

A “No” just means you need to regroup and prepare again. This is the tough part, do not take it personally! That’s right, it is worth repeating..... Do not take it personally.

I am asking for something a dozen times a week and I may get a “yes, let’s do IT!” twice. Seriously! I step up to the plate with a well thought out proposal, agreement, idea, you name it, I have pitched it, over and over and over again! I am the queen of “No, but may be next time.” If I took it personally I would have been crying under a rock for over a decade. The point its, one more time, don’t take it personally. You may not understand all the obstacles in play or maybe it just wasn’t good timing.

The old adage, “Try, try again” is true!

4) Package your proposal

How will this improve things for the organization? I like to walk through this process when determining the benefits:

- A. How is this good for the Pet?

- B. How is this good for the Pet Parent?
- C. How is this good for the Animal Hospital?
- D. How is this good for you (the valuable veterinary team member)?

Consider multiple aspects of your compensation, be flexible and consider all the benefits that could be included in your negotiations.

4 Negotiation Skills to Evaluate and Improve upon

Of all the interpersonal skills, this one is a learned skill. And since a small percentage of people are the “I love to negotiate” school of thought, the skill that can be improved upon rather quickly through dedication, preparation and simply following through! First, you have to decide to negotiate and do it.

Are you generally a strong advocate for others? You probably answered yes, I am assuming. Then turn this around to be an advocate for YOURSELF! Through observation in your life you have seen a bazillion negotiations but didn’t really realize it. You have probably negotiated for yourself but didn’t consider it as a negotiation.

1. **Words do matter as well as the way in which they are delivered.** As you put together your SMART Goal, write out the words you are comfortable with and can back up with conviction and passion. Avoid generality, get to the meat of your wage or need or desire to be the driver of some cause. Practice your delivery with a co-worker or friend who will give you appropriate, accurate feedback. OOOOOhhhh, did that strike a chord?

Yes, seek useful feedback, merely information that will help you nail your presentation (negotiating, yes it’s like public speaking). Speak clearly and slowly. Stay calm and deliberate. Make comfortable eye-contact and stand in a confident manner (not all closed down with arms crossed and looking at the ground). Use open body language and casual hand gestures. In this way you will be taken seriously because you are prepared, articulate and open.

2. The phrase “**Silence is Golden,**” is true. Silence is an amazing tool in your toolbox! When you are in the mode of asking, you must allow for the person to process your questions and respond. I can say this nicer but it doesn’t stick as well. Ask your question, then shut-up. Silence. For a few seconds. It’s gonna kill you and you will want to answer right away, but remember, **Silence is Golden.** Wait... alittle....longer.... Ah, yes, an answer is pierced from your boss’ mouth. You did it! Silence may be uncomfortable but it is a good strategy to embrace in all sorts of circumstances.
3. Listening is the other side of the coin. Ask. Silence. Then listen. Don’t listen to defend. **Listen to understand!** Get all of the remark. Absorb it then demonstrate you heard the response by saying, “If I heard you write you said.....fill in the blank.” This is referred to as active listening and mirroring the conversation. Learn what is most important to your boss in the negotiation and be prepared to come up with a win, win scenario.
4. **Practice!** Practice with a friend or even record yourself in preparation for the negotiation, or interview or proposal. I am dead serious! I have recorded myself

hundreds of times for a lot of different occasions. I learn more about myself, my ability to critique and even alter the negotiation without missing a heart beat or breaking a bead of sweat (not to say I don't get nervous or excited, I can simply manage it a little better).

Lastly, know when to walk away or to know when you will try again, later. There may be red-flags that tip you off. Or you are unable to maintain your composure. Or who knows what your trigger will be, but anticipate when you will call it a done deal, for now. Understand your own health and stress points. If negotiating for a wage, know your bottom line or what you can accept as appropriate (flex time, benefits, working from home).

Identify the key points that trigger you to walk away from any offer or situation.

If you do choose to move on, keep your options open, the veterinary community is far too small to burn bridges.

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