

### **Brief: How to ask for what you deserve**

Designed to keep distance learners doing AAT accounting/finance qualifications motivated, this story will explore ways of asking for what you deserve in the workplace, including pay increases, flexible working, compressed hours and sabbaticals. Please reference findings from the AAT salary survey (attached to this email) to frame the story around the idea that doing an AAT qualification leads to more opportunities and ultimately more money for learners/workers.

We've been asked to provide a headline and three line excerpt so the stories can be featured in their newsletters.

They'd like us to outline:

- What the article is about
- Any key findings/recommendations
- Name or relevant quotes of any experts interviewed

I'll be sending all of the story excerpts over to AAT, so if you could forward me yours by midday Friday, that would be great.

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## How to ask for what you deserve

When you first start a new job, it's natural to want to fit in and avoid rocking the boat. But as time goes on, you might realise that what seemed like an amazing deal at entry level is looking less attractive now that you're a fully fledged, experienced employee. Here are some top tips to help you ask for (and get) what you deserve in the workplace.

### Know your worth

We're raised to be modest about our achievements, and in many ways that's a good thing. In the workplace, however, it's important that your boss knows how much you contribute to the company's bottom line. Try this exercise: sit down and list all the things that you brought to the company when you were hired. Then, list all the things you're bringing to the company now. Make sure to note down any distance learning courses you've undertaken, or any specific things that only you can do. If there's more on the second list than the first, and there should be, then there's no need to feel shy about asking for some extra compensation from your company.

As a rough guide, take a look at AAT's findings on bonuses gained by our members. Members with a foundation certificate in accounting earned an average bonus of £400 over the last year. Members with a full professional diploma earned an average bonus of £500.

## Know exactly what you want

Whether you're asking for a pay rise or more flexible working hours, being specific about your needs shows your employers that you've given real thought to your decision. Doesn't 'I would like a 2% pay rise' sound much better than 'I'd really like to be paid more'?

Be prepared to justify yourself with real, hard facts as well. This is where your list of contributions comes in handy, because you'll be able to point to impressive figures to show exactly how you contributed to your company's profits.

Stuck for ideas? AAT's [Salary Survey](#) is full of the ways in which our members have improved their job satisfaction. Depending on the size of your company and your level of experience, you could be earning up to 5% more than you do currently.

## Think about your employers

While you're pitching your requests, you can instantly impress your boss by showing that you didn't just think about your own needs, but the needs and the capabilities of your company. Using the skills you learned as an AAT student, you can determine a maximum limit for your requests. Be prepared to compromise based on what you learn. Maybe your company can't afford to give you a huge raise this year, but they might be able to spare a lump sum as a bonus.

There might even be ways to frame your request so that it seems like a big innovation. For example, if you're looking to become a flexible worker, begin your pitch by telling your boss how much time you waste commuting every day, and point out that that time could be spent more productively if you worked from home.

## Don't be intimidated

The AAT Salary Survey discovered that there is still a significant wage gap between male and female employees. As an accountant, you are best placed to spot this kind of discrepancy in your own workplace, and there's no need to be shy about pointing it out. CEOs of Fortune 500 companies have already [spoken out](#) against the Wage Gap, and it's time that other employers followed their example. In OECD member states, of which the UK is one, wage discrimination is illegal, but the laws surrounding it rarely enforced because potential victims are afraid to speak up.

You might also be intimidated by asking for more from your company because of your age. Our report found that school leavers aged 16-18 earned an average of just £10,040 a year, and 19-24 year olds earned an average of £17,430. Of course, age doesn't necessarily equal experience. If you have an AAT qualification, for example, you're likely to be on equal footing with older employees in your organisation, and you might even find that you are more qualified than they are.

Try to avoid making comparisons between yourself and other employees when you pitch your request to your bosses, but don't shy away from pointing out discrimination if you encounter it. You'll be making your workplace a better environment for everybody, and you'll be getting the perks you're owed in the process.

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**HEADLINE:** How to ask for what you deserve

**EXCERPT:** It's not always easy to ask for what you want in the workplace. Whether you need a pay rise, a bonus, or more flexible working hours, our top tips can help you out. Featuring research from our 2017 Salary Survey.