Five ways to build your case during appraisals

It's that time of the year when employee performance appraisals take centrestage, and executives look forward to the longoverdue rewards for the hours they have put in through the year. At a time when several studies and surveys have shown that the average salary hikes this year will touch 13%, morale is high and you can't really blame employees, across the board, for dreaming of that big pay hike or generous bonus.

But appraisals are chancy things; what if your boss doesn't think you deserve a reward? It isn't always easy to convince him or her otherwise. But here outlined a few ways in which you could try to make a case for getting that pay hike or promotion.

1. ***Project your achievements***

During the appraisals process, make sure you speak - out loud - about all the work you have put in for the company and the milestones you have achieved. Even better if you can quantify it; managers love numbers . Bosses and seniors and unlikely to remember everything you did, but you must.

And it pays to refresh their memory. "At the appraisals stage, if you can convince your boss about your performance and the results, as per your key results areas, consider the battle almost won"

2. ***Go beyond KRAs***

HR circles say executives who are top performers tend to do much more work than what has been laid down in their KRAs. They feel appraisals are the time to highlight such achievements.

"It always pays to work in inter-related fields. Consolidate all your achievements, even those in related fields, and match them up against the KRAs and key performance indicators laid down for you, to build your case,"

3. ***Set goals a year ahead***

Don't just look at one or two appraisal meetings to build your case. Ideally, executives should work on this a year in advance.

"Executives should check what the next level of roles and responsibilities in the organisation entail and equip themselves accordingly. In fact, they can sit with their bosses once every quarter to review it. This also ensures the executive's agenda and career goals are fresh in the boss's mind,"

4. ***Contribute to critical areas***

Advises employees to contribute and add value to the areas of concern in the company.

"If an employee can help the employer cut costs, maximise revenues and attract talent, he or she becomes a valuable asset for the company in the current scenario,"

5. ***Understand your boss***

Just as all people are not same, all bosses are not the same either. Understand your boss's working and negotiating style. Some prefer aggressive arguments; some may be more open to feedback or discussions, while some may just be plain dictatorial.

When you build and pitch your case, do so keeping this in mind. In case your line manager has no direct power to grant you a promotion or a pay hike, you could talk directly to the person concerned.

Most importantly, avoid being directly confrontational with your boss and rather politely - and calmly - explain your case to show that you deserve the reward.