

How to Confidently Ask for a Raise

Practical Steps for Engineers

Pat Allen | [Layer8packet.io](https://layer8packet.io) | PA NUG - March 2026

Why Bother Asking?

- Raises aren't automatic. Many engineers wait too long and miss out.
- Average tech raise: 3-5% yearly, but skilled network roles seeing 8-10%+ in 2026 (automation, cloud, security demand).
- In PA: Network engineers average ~\$102K–\$117K (Glassdoor/ZipRecruiter 2026 data), seniors higher.
- People who ask often get 10-15% more than those who don't.

Network Engineer Salary in Pennsylvania



Network Engineer Salary Comparison by Location



Step 1 - Build Your Case

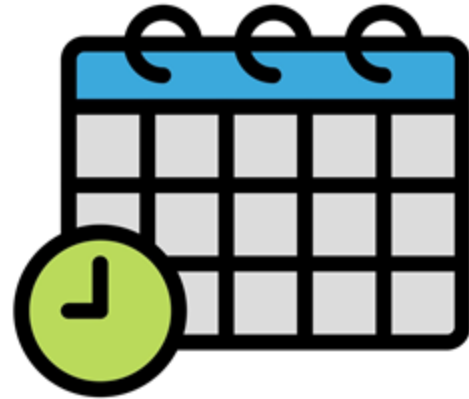
- Track your wins: Quantify impact (e.g., "Reduced downtime 30%," "Led SD-WAN rollout saving \$X").
- Highlight growth: New responsibilities, certs, mentoring, or leadership.
- Keep a "brag sheet" updated, review quarterly.
- Focus on business value, not just effort.

Step 2 - Know Your Market Value

- Research: Glassdoor, Salary.com, Levels.fyi, or local job postings.
- PA network engineer range: \$102K–\$117K average; seniors often \$130K+.
- Factor in experience, skills (automation/cloud/security boost this).
- Aim realistically: 10-15% if strong case; negotiate perks if salary capped.

Step 3 - Time is Right

- Best moments: After a big win, performance review, or budget planning (Q4/Q1 often).
- Schedule a dedicated 1:1: "I'd like to discuss my role and compensation."
- Avoid: During crises, layoffs, or casual chats.



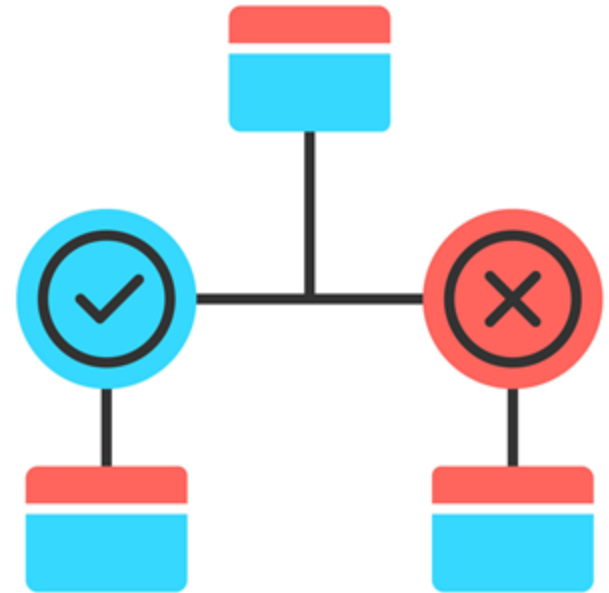
Step 4 - Have the Conversation

- Open positively: "I've really enjoyed working here and want to talk about my growth."
- Share facts: Achievements + market data + specific ask (e.g., "Based on this, I'm targeting \$X or a 12% increase").
- End open: "What are your thoughts?" Listen more than talk.
- Practice once or twice, it helps with nerves.



Handling Responses

- Yes → Thank them, confirm next steps in writing.
- No/Partial → Ask why, explore alternatives (bonus, PTO, training, future timeline).
- Counteroffer if needed: "I understand budget constraints, could we meet closer to \$Y?"
- Always follow up in email summarizing.



Quick Pitfalls to Skip

Do's	Don'ts
Do lead with your contributions and business impact (quantify wins)	Focus on personal needs ("bills are high, etc")
Do schedule a dedicated meeting and give your manager a heads-up on the topic.	Ambush or get emotional
Follow up in writing	Accept "no" without asking for feedback or next steps

Wrap-Up & Q&A

- Asking shows you value your work and the company.
- Worst case: You get useful feedback.
- Your skills are in demand, own that.
 - *“If your current company won’t pay you what your worth, your next one will.”*
- Questions?
- Connect: @layer8packet | Layer8Packet.io
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