

The \$100K Raise Request: My Bold Email to the Boss

It's been years since I've had to ask for a substantial raise. The last time I did, [it resulted in a \\$60,000 increase](#). Since then, I was either compensated fairly or, as an entrepreneur, benefited from growing profit distributions. But that dynamic changed when I sold my company—first a 60% stake, then the remaining 40% eighteen months later. Although I still hold equity, it's no longer tied to the sizable distributions I once received.

By selling, I knowingly entered a different compensation model: a guaranteed draw (salary), a bonus component, and the potential for additional incentive-based compensation (stock and options). I remained patient, understanding that transitions take time – but that patience has run out.

As you'll read in the email I sent to my boss (the third person I've reported to since joining the firm), I've repeatedly tried to have conversations about my compensation. When I sold, I made it clear that I expected to work my way back to a seven-figure income. The firm's leadership presented a compelling vision of how my practice would grow within a larger ecosystem. But reality hasn't matched the pitch.

I sold to a strategic buyer for two primary reasons: access to a large warm market and increased resources in marketing and sales to accelerate growth. In fairness and full transparency, I also wanted to de-risk by taking some chips off the table. However, the promised infrastructure didn't exist, and while the firm is now investing in these areas, progress has been slow. It took three years before I could even sell to existing clients in the firm – despite being told during deal discussions that I should expect **50+ net new logos annually as a baseline**. I mentally discounted that to 25, but the reality has been closer to **3-5 per year**, due to internal roadblocks I won't detail here.

You might be wondering why I'm pushing for a raise now, given that I've already shared my [two-year notice of resignation](#). Simply put: **two years is a long time**. I want to be compensated fairly for the value I continue to bring. After initial growing pains and a period of slowed momentum, we've finally regained traction.

The firm's under-delivery doesn't change the fact that I've been driving real results.

For the past three and a half years, I've prioritized taking care of my team. Now, it's time to take care of myself.

They promised growth and resources, and now I'm demanding my fair share:

[Boss],

I had planned to bring this up when we met [in person], but as you know, we didn't get through all the agenda items.

I've now been with the firm for 40 months, and in that time, I have not had a single discussion about my compensation. Despite numerous challenges - many outside my control - I've worked relentlessly to grow and strengthen the practice through resourcefulness, creativity, and persistence.

When I joined, my salary was set at \$402,000, grossed up for taxes & benefits from \$360,000 due to the W-2 to K-1 transition and the fact that [My Company] covered 100% of benefits for our team and their families prior to being acquired. Over the last four years, inflation has eroded my purchasing power by 21.2%, yet my compensation has remained flat.

Inflation						
2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	
1.40%	7.00%	6.50%	3.40%	2.90%	21.20%	

Key Contributions & Business Impact

- **Revenue Diversification & Growth:** Reduced our dependency on [Client X] from 40% of revenue in 2021 (\$1.1M) to just 10% in 2024 (\$440K), while growing total revenue from \$3.3M to \$4.2M (8.4% CAGR).
- **Commission Revenue:** Increased from \$276K in 2021 to \$843K in 2024 (45% CAGR).
- **Margin Expansion:** Improved gross margins from 61.9% in 2022 to 69.4% in 2024, with a budgeted 75.9% in 2025.
- **Business Development Challenges:** Despite the firm being significantly under-resourced in marketing and demand generation,

I've proactively driven growth through direct outreach, partnerships, and strategic initiatives.

- **Internal Referrals:** While initially promised at least 50 closed internal referrals per year, reality has been much slower (first deal took 300 days). Nonetheless, I've built strong internal relationships that have now resulted in 15 closed referrals (although volume is low, the close rate is high).
- **Product Innovation:** Developed and launched a new offering generating \$1M in services and \$3M in ARR from 33 net new logos in its first six months.
- **Partnership Development:** Rebuilt and Relunched a secondary offering to go multi-vendor, leading to five deals worth \$202K in services and \$600K in ARR.
- **Leadership & Scaling:** Reduced reliance on me as the sole revenue driver by mentoring the other partners in my practice, shifting to what I refer to as a seller/doer model for a more distributed sales effort (across 5 partners vs. 1). I've also started to get our three directors involved in sales in the last couple of months.

Challenges Faced

- **Operational Inefficiencies:** Significant delays in back-office support (for 18 months post-acquisition before transition, paying a 3.5% fee and receiving NO support). Many of my prior automations were removed, increasing my workload.
- **Unfulfilled Promises:** I was verbally promised a \$35K bonus adjustment for additional work but was later told it was forgotten. Although small it bothered me out of principle. I let it go.
- **Lost Business Due to Firm's Processes:** A \$1.25M/year deal with [our Software Partner] was lost after legal took eight weeks to review a contract, despite my repeated follow-ups. Time kills deals!

My Request

Given my contributions and the erosion of real compensation due to inflation and my key contributions, I am requesting an increase in my base compensation to **at least \$500,000** (+\$98K). I would welcome additional compensation adjustments, as I joined with the expectation of significantly higher earnings through salary and bonus. I would also like clarity on bonus potential, its levers, and other incentive compensation

(like stock & options).

I'm committed to growing this practice and maximizing our success, but I need to be compensated fairly for the value I'm creating. Let's plan to discuss this during our next 1:1.

Cheers,

Dom

Well, there you have it. Now, it's a waiting game to see how receptive they are to my request. Will they acknowledge the value I've brought to the firm? Or will they continue to undercompensate the very growth they've benefited from? Either way, I've made my case - and I'm prepared to act accordingly.

- Gen Y Finance Guy

P.S. In negotiating, I've learned three valuable lessons:

1. You typically have to choose your terms and their price or your price and their terms.
 2. You should extract your value, but be careful not to extract all the value - always leave money on the table so the other side feels like they got a good deal.
 3. Perception trumps reality, but when perception is reality, you hold the trump card - it's the rare case when you can have both your price and your terms.
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Gen Y Finance Guy

Hey, I'm Dom - the man behind the cartoon. You'll notice that I sign off as "Gen Y Finance Guy" on all my posts, due to the fact that I write this blog anonymously (at least for now). I like to think of myself as the *Chief Freedom Officer* here of my little corner of the internet. In the real world, I'm a 30-something former C-Suite executive turned entrepreneur turned capital allocator. I am trying to humanize

finance by sharing my own journey to Financial Freedom. I believe in total *honesty* and *transparency*. That is why before I ever started blogging, I decided that I would share all of my own [financial stats](#). I do this not to brag, but instead to inspire motivate, and also to hold myself accountable. My goal is to be a beacon of hope, motivation, and inspiration for *you*, the reader, by living life by example and sharing it **all** here on the blog. My sincere hope is that you will be able to learn from me - both from my successes and my failures! [Read More](#)