

**NEGOTIATE  
THE HIGHEST  
VOICEOVER  
RATE**

# 10 ESSENTIAL RULES TO INCREASE THE RATE BY 1500%

---

## **1. Try to get the client to name a price first.**

I can't count the number of times I've gotten more money than I thought for a job just by keeping my mouth shut for an extra 30 seconds.

I'm thinking of \$1,000 for the rate for the TV spot, but I ask the client what he's thinking first and he says, "The budget is only \$1500." An extra \$500 for exercising patience.

## **2. Be willing to say no, without hyperventilating.**

You simply cannot rule out the possibility of turning down a job if you don't like the terms. Once you can confidently tell yourself that you're okay if you don't get the job, you will be much stronger in negotiations.

## **3. Be clear and succinct about how you arrived at your price.**

It's tougher to defend if you're just making up numbers out of thin air. It's much easier to stick to your guns if you can articulate why your rate is what it is in the first place.

## **4. Assume the best of your negotiation partner until they give you legitimate reasons not to.**

A good deal usually does benefit both parties; there is no reason to assume that someone doesn't want to pay a fair price, or is out to cheat you.

## **5. Be flexible but know your limits.**

Have a price range in mind and stick within your range. A client may ask you to accept a lower rate because the budget is legitimately low on this project or he is promising volume.

Some flexibility on price is needed in some cases.

## **6. Learn how to write.**

Any deal, however small, is going to be done in writing. If you can't be clear, concise and use proper punctuation, it might be tough going for you.

## **7. Take a breath and make sure you've covered everything before agreeing to a deal.**

Have you addressed common issues related to voice sessions? Is there any studio and editing charges? Cost for revisions?

What's the scenario if it turns out to be more recorded audio than the client first envisioned?

## **8. Assess the character.**

Some deals end up being "Get the main details down and cross the T's and dot the I's later."

If you feel comfortable with the person, that's usually a fine approach. If the client seems disorganized or writes in all capitals, you probably need to take charge early and get every last detail in writing before you record a word.

## **9. Call clients on their vagueness. Politely.**

"Can you tell me what you mean by, 'It's just going to air in small markets'?" or "The script is almost the same in all of the variations. It's just the first section that changes so it's really only one spot."

You cannot be afraid to demand full clarification.

## **10. Don't accept bad behaviour.**

One of my agency mottos is: *The client is not always right.*

Along with being willing to say "no" because you don't like the terms of the deal (#2), certainly be willing to say "no" or at least stand your ground on a price if the client is not approaching the negotiation like a decent human being. One tip if the deal doesn't work out: Always remember to italicize the phrase, "I'll see you in court."

