

Voice Report

The Leading Independent Source of News and Best Practices for Communications Technology Professionals

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**Voice Report's
2009 National Salary
Survey Special Report**

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3.67% is Median Raise for Telecom Managers **Build Career & Visibility with Training Sessions, Efficiency Calculations**

You can't rely on your strong technical skills alone to get you your next raise.

Keeping dial tone alive is "table stakes," even with the bandwidth concerns that come with IP telephony, says Jennifer Perrier-Knox, senior research analyst who specializes in IT human resources management and strategic planning at London, Ontario-based Info-Tech Research Group.

Telecom abilities are viewed by executives as commodity skills that are easily acquired or outsourced.

Indeed, only 46% of the 155 telecom managers canvassed in *Voice Report's 2009 National Salary Survey* expect to get a raise at their next salary negotiations. Among those who do anticipate a pay increase, 35% expect it to be smaller than last year.

Raises are trending downward: The median raise granted to telecom managers in 2009 was 3.67% (average 5.44%), and 79 out of 152 respondents earned a raise. That's down from the median 4.47% raise (average 6.42%) received by 186 of the 214 telecom manager respondents to our 2008 survey.

Pay increases are likely out of the question for many, with the economy in the early stages of recovery – and the freeze isn't just limited to telecom professionals.

Managers who traditionally have gone to bat for raises for their direct reports are being more conservative since the recession hit, notes Dave Willmer, executive director at Menlo Park, Calif.-based IT staffing firm Robert Half Technology.

Now is the time to concentrate on long-term compensation and advancement objectives, Perrier-Knox says.

"Don't expect a raise or a promotion next month, even if you deserve one," she notes. "You should be thinking about where you're going to be in six months or a year, or even 18 months down the road."

Read on for strategies to build your visibility in your enterprise, so you can keep the job you have, win a promotion or justify a hard-earned pay increase.

Map Telecom Projects to Business Goals

Telecom professionals easily become invisible when all their work is done behind the scenes.

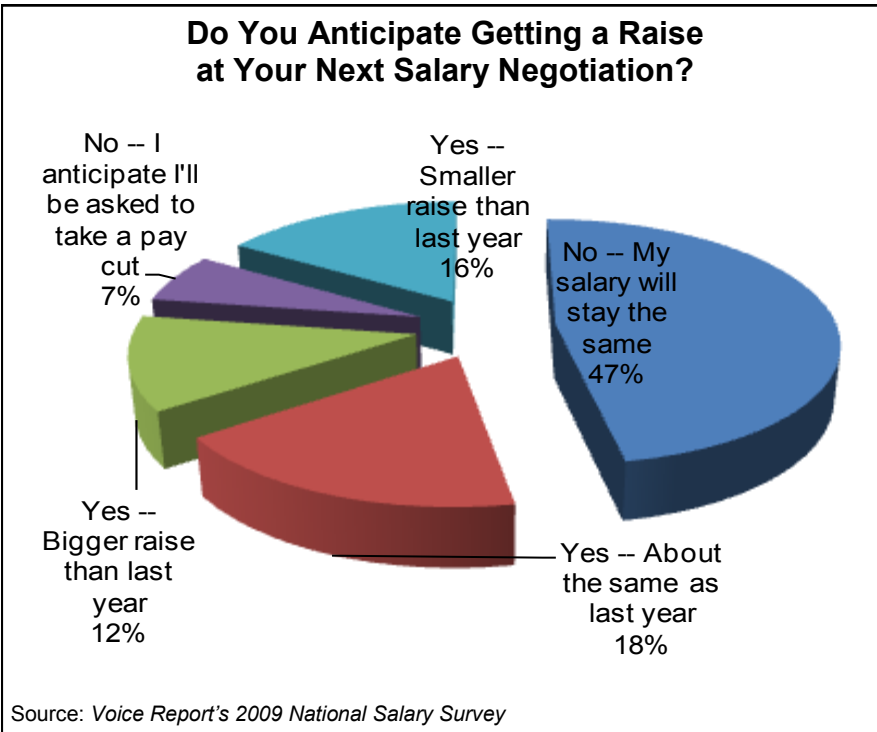
The best way to draw attention to your efforts is to align your projects with your enterprise’s goals, Perrier-Knox says. Start with this question: “What telecom technology will advance the business’s strategy?” If your company is on a mission to serve its customers better, you could focus on enhancing computer-telephony integrations for customer service or sales staff, Perrier-Knox offers. Another example: If your enterprise is slashing travel to save costs, brainstorm ways to support more virtual interactions – perhaps through video conferencing.

But that won’t necessarily mean investing in new technology. “For the quickest high-impact wins, you need to see what you already have before making a case for buying anything new,” Perrier-Knox says.

Investigate whether there are unused features that could solve a business challenge, like call recording or instant messaging, for instance.

Be the One Everyone Associates with Telecom

Even if telecom plays a big role in



Average and Median Raises by Title			
Title	% Who Got a Raise	Average Raise Among Those Who Got One	Median Raise Among Those Who Got One
IT Managers (14 resp.)	57%	3.42%	3.63%
All Non-Management Telecom Staffers (72 resp.)	56%	5.20%	4.08%
Telecom Directors (40 resp.)	55%	7.67%	4.98%
Telecom Managers (152 resp.)	52%	5.44%	3.67%
Vendor Employees (43 resp.)	49%	16.59%	4.44%
Consultants (18 resp.)	33%	17.12%	9.61%
IT Directors (22 resp.)	32%	11.30%	4.35%

Source: Voice Report's 2009 National Salary Survey

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helping end users meet their objectives, you won't get any recognition if no one knows you had a hand in their success.

Schedule biweekly or monthly meetings with key customer-facing stakeholders, like the leaders of the sales, marketing and customer service teams, Perrier-Knox recommends. Use the meetings to learn what their business needs are and if they're being fulfilled.

Send out monthly reports or newsletters describing project progress and upcoming projects, Perrier-Knox advocates. You can post the messages to an intranet bulletin board or help desk site, or push them out to executives or all end users via e-mail. Keeping up contact puts your name in front of people who can later vouch for your contributions.

Walk around and talk to users. Solicit their feedback and use the time to identify concerns that might never make it to a help desk ticket, Perrier-Knox says.

Host "lunch-and-learn" sessions to teach end users how to use existing features on their phones or explain functionality that's just been added. It's important to explain the features in context; demonstrate how each group of end users can use them to make their jobs easier, Perrier-Knox adds.

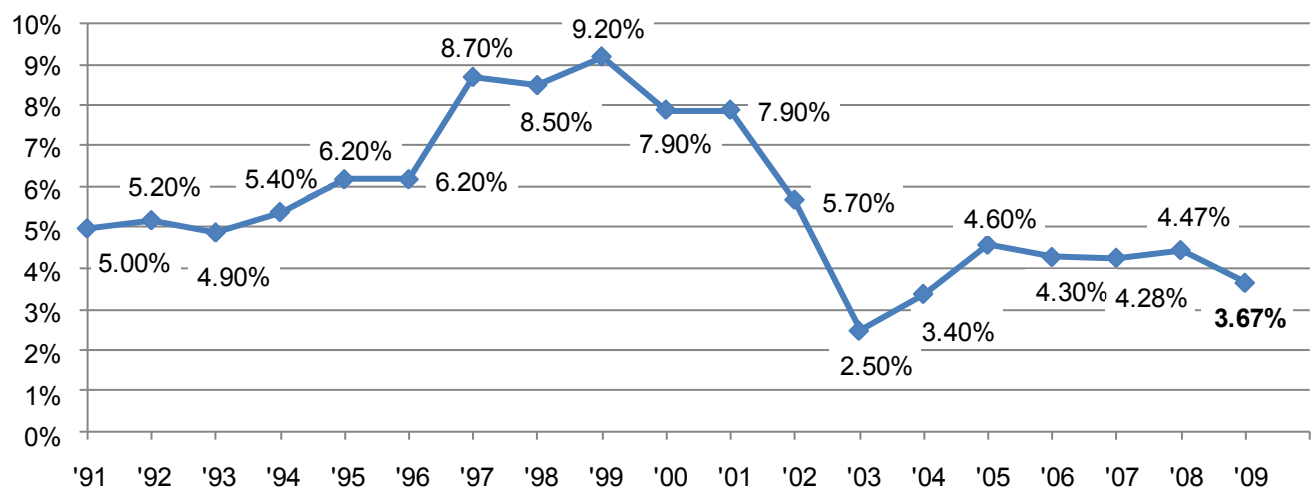
Create training manuals and share them with end users, Willmer suggests.

The number of meetings, reports, user conversations or training sessions you conduct will be helpful fodder in your raise conversation.

Wear More than One Hat

There's a good chance your IT or telecom department is running with less than a full staff. Executives appreciate employees who can take on more responsibilities, Willmer notes.

Telecom Managers' Raises, 1991 to 2009



*Raises from 1991 to 2005 were calculated as averages. Raises from 2006 to 2009 were calculated as medians.

Source: *Voice Report's National Salary Surveys, 1991-2009*

How to Justify a New Hire

The raise discussion will be tough. Making a case to hire more staffers will be even harder.

The best tactic: Explain that you need additional skills on staff to accomplish the telecom projects that will help your enterprise meet its strategic goals, recommends Jennifer Perrier-Knox, senior research analyst who specializes in IT human resources management and strategic planning at London, Ontario-based Info-Tech Research Group.

Don't expect this argument to fly if your operation is singularly focused on cutting expenses, though. New hires are much harder to justify when every investment looks like a cost, and not a strategic move.

In that situation, explain that cutting staff in previous layoffs cost your company more than it saved, says Dave Willmer, executive director at Menlo Park, Calif.-based IT staffing firm Robert Half Technology.

Estimate the revenue your business loses with each hour of network downtime. If you cut a staffer to save \$60,000 but the network was down and for three hours and your enterprise lost \$3 million because you're understaffed, you have a strong argument to refill the position, Willmer says. ☎

Get trained on new technologies in your off time; it'll make you even more valuable.

Highlight Cost Savings and Efficiencies

Play up how you've saved the company money, or produced revenue or efficiencies, Willmer recommends. Revisit a three-year-old project – the savings today are likely greater than when it was first implemented.

Ask the managers of business units you've worked with, "What was the financial impact of the project we completed?"

You might be able to justify a 2% raise if you can prove the projects you led improved efficiency by 6%.

Simply keeping your department running at the same efficiency level could earn you kudos if you cut staffers and saved their salaries without hurting productivity.

Keep your expectations flexible, Willmer stresses. Even if you think you deserve a \$5,000 raise and you only win a \$1,000 increase, remember that it's a lot more that others received. ☎

Average and Median Telecom Manager Raises by Industry

Industry	% Who Got a Raise	Average Raise Among Those Who Got One	Median Raise Among Those Who Got One
Banking (8 resp.)	75%	4.88%	5.36%
Education (52 resp.)	42%	4.67%	3.31%
Government (10 resp.)	50%	4.75%	3.45%
Health Care (19 resp.)	89%	5.17%	3.23%
Insurance (6 resp.)	100%	6.25%	4.63%
Legal (4 resp.)	0%	N/A	N/A
Manufacturing (15 resp.)	33%	4.52%	4.55%
Retail (7 resp.)	43%	2.14%	2.41%
Technology (9 resp.)	67%	12.32%	4.21%
Transportation (4 resp.)	0%	N/A	N/A
Other (18 resp.)	50%	5.07%	4.08%

Source: Voice Report's 2009 National Salary Survey

*Peers Offer Their Best Strategies***12 Ways to Argue for Your Next Raise**

Telecom managers shared their most effective strategies for arguing for raises in *Voice Report's 2009 National Salary Survey*. Here are 12 of the best answers:

- “Networking with the right people helps, and **being on projects that have high visibility and impact**,” says Thomas Aham, telecom manager at The Boston Consulting Group, in Boston.
- “I made a **list of all my accomplishments** including my certification, and tasks that I take on daily and showed it to the director,” says Amy Rezendes, telecom manager at a tech company in Massachusetts.
- “Additional responsibility (departments), working with business, **SAVINGS**,” says Ron Zanardo, senior manager of IT, including telecom and network services, at United Stationers Supply Co., in Deerfield, Ill.
- “**Display the cost to have telecom managed externally** [compared] to what it costs for my salary,” says the telecom manager at an insurance company in Ontario.
- “**Comparing my job responsibilities/salary** with other professionals,” says Rick Martin, telecom analyst at UCSD Medical Center, in San Diego.
- “Performance,” says Don Wilcox, telecom manager at State National Companies in Bedford, Texas. “The level of performance for a one-man shop is unparalleled. **Doing what it takes to get the job done** in the timeframe allowed.”
- “**Continued education**,” says Ellen Morrison, telecom manager at Hiram College, in Hiram, Ohio.
- “[Showing] **how much it would take to train someone** to replace me,” says the telecom analyst at technology company in North Carolina.
- “**Doing more with fewer people**,” says Jon Clark, telecom strategy specialist at Land O’Lakes, in Arden Hills, Minn.
- “Alignment and affiliation with other IT functions, **advancing voice integration with other systems**,” says Joseph Dechow, telecom manager at Munson Medical Center, in Traverse City, Mich.
- “Additional responsibility which extends my working hours,” says Gus Rangel, telecom analyst at Montefiore Medical Center, in New York City. “**Typical work day went from 10 hours to about 12** Monday through Friday.”
- “Arguments or negotiations are not needed,” says Steve Hullett, telecom manager for Mutual Telecom Services, who currently works in Iraq. “**I keep a PBX and all peripherals operational in a war zone**, under extreme conditions, and my company compensates me well for the dedication and effort.” ☎

27 Most In-Demand Telecom Skills

Voice Report collected and analyzed 50 current telecom manager job openings.

Employers ask for an average of 7 years experience and 64% want candidates with at least a bachelor's degree. The average salary offered among the jobs we analyzed is \$94,132.

We flagged the skills that employers mention most commonly; use this analysis to make sure the right key words are in your resume:

Employers want candidates who have experience with:	% seeking applicants with that skill:
Staff management	58%
Project management	48%
Customer service	44%
Vendors/outsourcers/ contractors	44%
VoIP	38%
24/7 availability	36%
Budgeting	28%
PBX	28%
Troubleshooting	26%
Engineering management	24%
Training	22%
WAN management	22%
Facility organization/ relocation	20%
Hardware lifecycle/ replacement projects	20%
LAN management	20%
Carriers	18%
Avaya	16%
Business strategies	16%
Call centers	16%
Software lifecycle/ replacement projects	16%
Video conferencing	16%
ACD	14%
MPLS	14%
Security	14%
SIP	14%
TCP/IP	14%
TDM	14%
Source: Voice Report analysis of 50 telecom manager job ads posted online	

Brush Up Those People Skills Tips to Land Your Next Telecom Job

The IT and telecom job market has shown signs of recovery for the past four months.

That's according to Dave Willmer, who spent 11 years placing candidates and now oversees those operations as executive director at Menlo Park, Calif.-based IT staffing firm Robert Half Technology.

Companies cut deep into payrolls in reaction to the recession and in many cases don't have the resources to fill all of the positions they need. So your resume should play up how you've saved previous employers money, or produced revenue or efficiencies.

Highlight Communication Abilities

Your certifications and hands-on experience will determine whether your resume makes the first cut with recruiters.

But it's your business skills that will catapult you to a higher level of consideration, says Jennifer Perrier-Knox, senior research analyst who specializes in IT human resources management and strategic planning at London, Ontario-based Info-Tech Research Group.

Draw attention to your analytical, business-case building, project management, supervisory and communication strengths. Demonstrate that you can interface with the rest of the organization, she advises.

Keep copies of the reports and newsletters you circulate with key stakeholders and reference them in your resume. You could even compile these write-ups as a communications portfolio to accompany your resume, Perrier-Knox recommends.

Non-technical skills have a longer shelf life and are more easily transferable than training related to a specific platform or communications systems brand, which means it's a good investment of your time to beef up your people and business skills, she adds.

It's All About the Network (the Social One)

Leverage social networking tools like LinkedIn,

Facebook and Twitter to connect with those who could lead you to your next job, Willmer recommends.

But be careful not to be overbearing. Always contribute something to the relationship first; send useful articles or information related to your contacts' companies or industry segments.

Let members of your network know you're looking for a job, and ask for guidance on how to apply or what skills are required to work in a specific vertical, Willmer says. ☎

Shift Your Telecom Career into High Gear

Boost your visibility with key enterprise stakeholders and your boss with the techniques shared by **Jennifer Perrier-Knox**, senior research analyst at Info-Tech Research Group, in this episode hosted by *Voice Report's* **Jessica Gdowski**. Tune in at <http://www.thevoicereport.com/TelecomJunkiesArchive/Telecom-Career>



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3 Awesome Job Openings

Voice Report reviewed 50 telecom manager job openings in our analysis of in-demand communication technology skills. Here are three jobs with some character:

Publix (Best Paid): Manage the voice and data networks at the Lakeland, Fla., headquarters of this grocery chain and take home a potential \$170,325 (including bonuses). They're looking for candidates with at least four years managing voice and data lines, SONET rings, dial backup lines, VPN, wireless MANs, WANs and LANs.

https://careers.peopleclick.com/careerscp/client_publix/external/jobDetails.do?functionName=getJobDetail&jobPostId=8653&localeCode=en-us

JetBlue Airways (Most Unusual): Sign on as the manager of IT servers at JetBlue Airways and you could find yourself returning seat backs and tray tables to their full upright and locked positions.

"When working or traveling on JetBlue flights, and if time permits, all capable crewmembers are asked to assist with light cleaning of the aircraft," according to the job posting, which offers employment for a manager to handle the airline's telecom, data and server relationship with Verizon Business.

www7.jobirn.com/?q=manager%20it+jobs

Uline (Most Experience): This distributor of packaging and industrial supplies is looking for a senior telecom manager with at least 15 years of experience in telecom and at least 10 years in IT. You'll also need a Bachelor's degree in technology, telecom management or a related field to take this job in Gurnee, Ill.

<http://recruit.uline.com/ENG/candidates/default.cfm?szCategory=jobprofile&szOrderID=2980&szCandidateID=0&szReturnToSearch=1> ☎