How to Negotiate $100's in Savings with Everyday Bills

Did you know that with a few phone calls you could quickly add hundreds or thousands of dollars to your yearly savings? You can (and should) try this today.

One of the biggest sources of spending is our monthly bills—things like rent, insurance, cell phones, credit cards, internet and cable. You may be able to negotiate any of these to lower your totals, eliminate fees, or fix billing errors. You may also save money by switching to plans that better reflect your needs. A huge benefit of negotiating a bill is that you may only need to do it once—then the savings keep adding up month after month.

Here's some tips on how to negotiate your bills like a pro:

DON'T portray yourself as a fickle and uncommitted customer who will leave as soon as you find a better deal.

DO portray yourself as a professional, appreciative customer who would like to be able to work out a deal with them (but will go elsewhere if you have to).

Think of the situation from the company's perspective and the perspective of the customer service representative. For them, it's not worth it to go out of their way for a rude person. On the other hand, loyal customers are hard (and expensive) to find—if you're nice, it might be worthwhile to extend a special offer to keep you around.

Be persistent, calm and firm.

If an offer isn't good enough you could say something like, "I'm sorry, but that's not going to be an acceptable solution. What are our other options?"

If your first contact says they don't have authority to grant your request, you could say, "May I please speak with someone who can?" Know what you're looking for, and explain this clearly and politely as many times as you need to.

Be patient.

Remember, you're hoping to save hundreds (or thousands) of dollars with a few phone calls. It'll be worth it, even if you have to wait on hold for a bit.

Remember to say things like "please," "thank you," "sir," "ma'am" and "I appreciate your help."

When you get what you wanted: Stop! Say "thank you," confirm the deal, and move on to the next negotiation.

Understand when the reps have done all they can. At this point it's not worth your energy argue. You then have four choices:

- Ask to speak with a supervisor.
- Try again later with someone else.
- Accept the deal offered.
- Walk away and go without or go to a different company.